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*ROSE OF THE WORLD.*¹

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IX.

'THEY'RE going!' said Bethune triumphantly. 'Their fellow has patched up the motor; it will take them as far as the station at least.'

Harry English, pacing the little study much after the manner of Muhammed the night before, halted abruptly.

'They ought to have gone an hour ago,' he answered. And, when he looked like that, for a certainty Captain English wore no pleasant countenance. 'What has he been doing?'

The relaxation of the muscles, which was Bethune's usual substitute for a smile, came over his face.

'First, he's been trying to persuade Aspasia to go away with him. And secondly, he's been reproaching her for her unfilial behaviour in refusing to leave us; and thirdly, he has been bestowing his avuncular curse upon her and repudiating her for ever and ever. All this naturally took some time.'

A flash of pleasure swept across the other's gloom.

'So the girl sticks to us. That is right,' he said. Then the frown came back. 'You've warned them to be quiet, I hope, with their infernal car?'

'I've told the chauffeur if he makes a sound more than he can help, he'll have me to deal with. I made the fellow swear to wait for them half-way down the avenue. Lady Aspasia's a good sort

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too, take her all in all—has her head screwed on the right way. She'll keep the old man in order.'

English took a couple of turns again, and halted, his head bent. There were voices passing in the hall without: Sir Arthur's querulous tones, Lady Aspasia's unmistakable accents, strident even under her breath. Bethune went to the window.

'There they go,' said he presently. 'She's giving him her arm. By George,' he went on, 'she, for one, won't be anxious to dispute your identity, Harry!'

The other had sat down by the fire and was gazing into the flames after his old attitude. Bethune, at the window, remained gazing upon the departure of the undesired guests. In a second or two he broke forth again:

'The motor's jibbing! Good Lord, they'll have it into the gate—now into the apple-tree!' He gave a single note of mirth. 'Lady Aspasia is holding down Sir Arthur by main force. Of course he wants to teach the chauffeur how to do it. But she knows better. By George,' ejaculated Bethune, in a prophetic burst, 'she's the very woman for him! Ah, here comes Miss Aspasia, hatless, to offer her opinion. I'd give something to hear her; she does not want them back upon us—I warrant.' There was a pause. 'They're off! Thank God, they're off!' Still the man lingered by the window.

Aspasia was waving her handkerchief ironically after the departing company, as the car proceeded down the avenue, fitfully, at a speed which (as she subsequently remarked) 'would have made any self-respecting cart-horse smile.'

When she turned to re-enter the house, Bethune had the vision of her rosy face, all brightening with smiles. The interchange of mute greetings, the swift impression of her fair light youth as she flashed by, left him lost in a muse.

Harry English stirred in his chair and, on the moment, his friend was at his side.

'They're gone,' repeated he, rubbing his hands.

The other made no direct reply; but, stooping forward, picked up one of the fragments of paper that had escaped Bethune's hand in the morning's work of destruction.

He looked at it for a few seconds, abstractedly, and then laughed.

'So you were writing a life of me, old man?' said he.

Bethune stood, looking as if he had been convicted of the most abject folly. And English lightly flicked the scrap into the blaze:

'The life that counts is the life that no other soul can know,' said he.

But he had no sooner said the words than he corrected himself, and his voice took that altered note which marked any reference to his wife.

'At least,' he said, 'no other soul but one.'

Those friends, who were so much to each other, in speech communicated less than the most ordinary acquaintances. Bethune stood, in his wooden way, looking down at the armchair. Just now he had something to say, and it was difficult to him. At last, pointing to the hearth, as if he still beheld the fruit of his labour of friendship being consumed in it, he spoke, awkwardly :

'It did its work, though.'

English flashed an upward look, half humorous, half searching.

'What did its work ?'

'The—my—oh, the damned Life !'

The other man pondered over the words a little while. Then, with a smile that had something almost tender in it, he looked up at his friend again :

'I am afraid you will have to explain a little more, Ray.'

Bethune shifted his weight from one foot to the other. The colour mounted to his face. He stared down at English, wistfully.

'It's a bit hard to explain,' he said, 'yet I'd like you to know—that diary, those letters of yours, I had to have them, extracts of them, for the work, you see. . . . Well—'

Here came a pause of such length that English was fain to repeat :

'Well ?'

Then Bethune blurted it out :

'She had never read them—'

'Ah !'

'She never wanted to read them. Oh !'—quickly, 'it's not that she didn't care.'

'You need not explain that.'

English's head was bent. His voice was very quiet, but Bethune's whole being thrilled to the tumult he inarticulately felt in the other's soul. He half put out his hand to touch him, then drew it back.

'Go on with your story—with your own part of the story,' said Harry.

'She did not want to read them,' said Bethune. 'I made her.'

The husband offered no comment ; and, drawing a long breath like a child, his friend went on :

‘ And when she read at last—oh ! even I could see it—it was as if her heart broke.’

Still the bent head, the hands clasped over the knees, the silence. Bethune could bear it no longer, and took courage to lay that touch of timid eager sympathy upon English’s shoulder.

‘ Harry, I’m such a fool, I can’t explain things.’

‘ Oh, I understand,’ answered English then, in a deep vibrating voice. He rose suddenly and squared himself, drawing in the air in a long sigh. ‘ Do you think I could misunderstand—her ? ’

Their looks met. There was a wonderful mixture of sweetness and sorrow on the face of him whom life and death had equally betrayed.

Suddenly they clasped hands, for the first time since their parting in the Baroghil passes. Then they stood awhile without speaking. Harry English once more fixing visions in the fire, and Bethune looking at his comrade.

For most of his years he had known no deeper affection than his friendship for this man. He had mourned him with a grief which, now to think on, seemed like a single furrow across the plain field of his life ; and there he stood !

‘ Captain, my Captain. . . .’ said Raymond. His rough voice trembled, and he laughed loud to conceal it. The other flashed round upon him with his rarely beautiful smile.

‘ Ah,’ said he, ‘ it’s like old times at last to hear you at your rags and tags of quotation again ! ’

There fell again between them the pause that to both was so eloquent.

Then, from the far distance, into their silence penetrated a faint uncouth sound : from the moorland road, the motor, carrying for ever out of their lives him who had had so much power upon them, and was now so futile a figure, seemed to raise a last impotent hoot.

Sir Arthur Gerardine was gone. Raymond rubbed his hands and smiled as since boyhood he had scarcely smiled.

‘ It is good,’ cried Harry, then, boyishly in his turn, ‘ to see your nut-cracker grin once more, Ray. As Muhammed, I’ve looked for it many a time in vain—I thought I had lost my old sub.’

‘ But there’s one thing we must remember,’ said Bethune, suddenly earnest again, in the midst of the welcome relaxation.

'We must remember the old fellow's threat. You will have a bit of a job to keep out of trouble with the powers that be, won't you, after Sir Arthur's meddling?'

The anxiety on his countenance was not reflected upon English's face.

'I shall have my own story to tell,' he said, 'and I think that I have knowledge of sufficient value to make me a *persona grata* in high quarters just now. They will be rather more anxious, I take it, to retain my services than to dispense with them—in spite of Sir Arthur.'

He broke off, his brow clouded again. He sighed heavily.

'But what does that matter?' he cried; 'just now there is only one thing that matters in the whole world.'

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

'It was the most interesting case I have ever had' (wrote M. Châtelard, in the third volume of his '*Psychologie Féminine*'), 'and the most abnormal. The illness, caused by shock, concussion—call it what you will—was benign, yet it was long. There was a little fever, a little delirium: un petit délire très doux, tout poétique, que, plongé dans mon vieux fauteuil de chêne, au milieu du silence de cet antique manoir, j'écoutais presque avec plaisir. Un gazouillement d'oiseau; une âme de femme, errant comme Psyché elle-même, sur les fleurs dans les jardins embaumés; délicates puerilités parfumées de la vie. Jamais une note de passion. Jamais un cri de ce cœur si profondément blessé. . . .

'And when later, by almost imperceptible steps, we drew the gentle creature back to health, the singular phenomenon persisted.

'We physicians are, of course, accustomed in similar circumstances to find a strong distaste in the patient suffering from shock to any effort of memory. Memory, indeed, by one of those marvellous dispensations of nature, is reluctant to bring back the events which have caused the mischief. But, with the beautiful Lady G—— (it is always thus I must recall her) there was something more than the mere recoil of weakness. . . .

'On eût pu croire que cette âme brisée de passion, abreuvée de douleur, s'était dit qu'elle n'en voulait plus; qu'elle n'en pouvait plus. Ce n'était pas, ici, les souvenirs, qui faisaient défaut. Je l'ai trop observée pour m'y méprendre. En avait-elle des souvenirs et d'assez poignants, mon Dieu! . . . But with a strength of will which surprised me in her state, she put these memories from her and deliberately lived in the present. Elle goûtait son présent, elle savourait la paix voluptueuse de sa convalescence. . . .

'Je n'ai qu'à fermer les yeux, pour la revoir, sur son lit—longue, blanche et belle. Je revois ce jeune teint—divinement jeune sous cette grande chevelure

d'argent ; cet air de lys au soleil, à la fois languissant et mystérieusement heureux. Ces yeux noyés dans une pensée profonde. Ces lèvres entr'ouvertes par un léger sourire. A qui rêvait-elle—à quoi ? Cette belle bouche muette n'en soufflait jamais mot. . . .

'Of the three who had loved her, for whom was that smile ? Certes, not for the poor Sir ! And of the other two ? (I must here frankly set down the humiliating admission, to me, that woman was, and remains Sphinx—yes, Sphinx, even to me, her physician, who beheld her, watched, tended her, through all those moments of suffering, weakness, *défaillance* where the soul reveals itself.) Which of the two, then, reigned in her secret dream ? The sardonic Major, who had tracked her till she could escape him no longer, whose love was merciless. There are women, and many, who would never know passion but for defeat. The husband ? The reincarnated ghost ? Well reincarnated, that one !—The most virile type that I ever met. Nature of fire, born lover, under all his reticence of English gentleman and soldier. I have seen that face of his, half bronze, half marble, grow crimson and white within the minute, as I spoke to him of the woman, the while there would not be a tremble in the hand that held his pipe. I will confess he had all my sympathy ; he was worthy of her. But she—why, to this day I ask myself : does the man who possesses her know the secret of her heart ?

'The day after the damaged motor had carried away the poor Governor—machine détraquée, clopin-clopant, symbole de cette vie qui jusqu'ici semblait rouler en triomphe et qui, désormais, se traînera si gauchement—the day following Sir G——'s departure, I say, the Major B—— also left. It was the very least he could have done. And after the astounding fact of his betrothal to the pretty little Miss C——, I myself felt his presence antipathetic. . . . Ah, but a strategist, that officer of Guides, strategist of the first order ! A masterly move, that betrothal, to disarm any possible suspicion of his friend and keep the while a footing in his beloved's house ! But the little one, she deserved better . . . *délicieuse enfant* ! With what innocent eyes she looked at me when I told her that, above all things, she must not whisper to my patient a word of her engagement. "Understand well, Miss," said I to her ; and was ashamed of myself thus to join with him who was deceiving her. "It is because the least agitation, even a happy one, must be avoided." "Ah, that is why," said she, "you will not let her poor husband go to her ?" "That is why," I replied, dissembling, "above all things, above all things, she must not be hurried."

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She must not be hurried !

'If she wants me ?' had said Harry English to Dr. Châtelard, in that dawn hour of dire omen.

'My dear sir,' had answered the other, 'immediately, of course !'

Rosamond lay, restored to those that loved her, a pale rose among her white tresses, and Harry English still waited her summons.

Still waiting !

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'Above all,' repeated the genial physician, who had stood by them so stoutly in their hour of trouble, as he took his reluctant departure from a house where his presence was, obviously, no

longer needed, and where yet—unfortunate psychologist—he had failed to probe the story to the core, ‘above all, she must not be hurried!’

These were his farewell instructions.

It seemed to him that the patient husband had a strange smile on hearing this admonition.

‘How much does he know?’ asked Châtelard of himself, clinging with characteristic pertinacity to his peculiar interpretation of events. ‘How much does he suspect?’

Never before, perhaps, had the active-minded and gregarious Frenchman found himself thus regretting the prospect of a return to the congenial movement of his native city. But it was with a definite sense of reluctance that, on this March morning, he drove away through the budding orchard trees, leaving the Old Ancient House and all the desolate moorland behind him. This lonely antique habitation still held close the enigma of lives in which he had become deeply interested—interested, not only with that vivid intelligence which was ever eager to know, but with the warmth of a very excellent heart.

He would dearly have loved to know, true; but, above all, he would dearly have loved to help.

‘Eh, Dieu sait,’ he sighed as the fly jingled and bumbled over the grass-grown avenue, ‘Dieu sait ce qui va se passer là-bas, maintenant que je n’y suis plus!’

He gave a lingering look at the twisted chimney-stacks against the pale sky, before setting his face for Paris, *Ville Lumière*, once more.

‘She must not be hurried!—Until she asks for me; then,’ had resolved Harry English, ‘I will wait.’

And at first, indeed, it seemed as if the waiting could not be hard. For with the young year had come new hopes to the Old Ancient House. And with Rosamond turning to life in her room upstairs under the gables, he who loved her could well afford to sit with patience below.

Yet time went by, and the summons came not.

Upon that first blessed morning, indeed, when after all these long days she had awakened at last, and looked upon the world with seeing eyes once more, Rosamond had whispered to Aspasia:

‘Harry—is he here?’

The girl’s heart had leaped with joy.

‘Yes,’ came her eager answer. ‘Will you see him?’

Like a little Mercury, one foot poised, hand outstretched to grasp the happy moment, Aspasia stood ready to take flight upon her errand of comfort. But the pale woman in the bed shrank. The old shy withdrawal from the thought of emotion—as once from sorrow, now from joy—seemed to be upon her.

‘Not yet,’ she faintly sighed.

And, day by day, the singular little scene was re-enacted. In defiance of doctor’s orders, Baby—with the sense of that other’s hungry disappointment heavy upon her heart—would put her query ever more pleadingly :

‘Will you not see him? Can you not see him? May it not be for to-day?’

But ever would come the same reply, while long lids sank over the timid eyes, and a slow colour mounted in the transparent face :

‘Not yet.’

Then the woman would fall back into her secret dream, lying long hours in that quietude at which her physician marvelled, while he welcomed its healing power. It was a pause in life. So the young mother may lie and hold her infant in her languid arms and be happy because of its very weakness and incompleteness; and deem it more safely her own that it has yet no speech for her, no will to meet hers, even no power of love with which to answer hers.

It is harder to be patient in happiness than in sorrow. These days of waiting began to tell upon Harry English more than all the years had done.

Yet it was idle to say : ‘She must not be hurried,’ since time marches with us all, whether we will or no; and with time, the events which change our destiny. The most guarded being cannot escape the influence of those lives with which Fate has thrown his fortune, and Rosamond was destined at last to be shaken out of her dreams by the combined energies of other fortunes.

M. Châtelard had been gone some time. The green buds were swelling over the March land. The convalescent had been promoted to her armchair for an hour or two daily, when a telegram summoned Harry English to London.

Bethune had undertaken all the preliminary official steps for his friend. Now the moment could not be delayed when the missing officer must give his personal explanations. The excuse of his wife’s danger could no longer be maintained for his

absence : he had to leave the Old House without having seen her again.

For two mornings after his departure Baby entered her aunt's room to find her lying among a bower of flowers. The husband was pleading for himself, wooing his love, for the third time. At first he sent no word with his gift, but let these most gracious messengers speak in fragrance. Aspasia was wise enough to hold her tongue upon the subject. Even to her downright perceptions the silence which enwrapped the invalid seemed stirred, palpitating with the awakening of emotions, just as, all over the land, after her winter sleep, the earth was stirred, palpitating, to the promise of spring.

The third morning the girl was singularly late in making her appearance. But Rosamond did not seem to miss her. She rested, smiling among her pillows, her diaphanous hand enfolding the letter that Mary had (with a subdued look of triumph) brought her on top of an open box overflowing with lily-of-the-valley.

Rosamond's first love-letter had come to her blent with the same perfume. The acrid sweetness rose like a greeting, an intangible intermingling of past and present. It spoke more eloquently than even his words. She drew the flowers slowly from their case. Below all, nestling beneath the waxen bells, she found one deep-hearted dark crimson rose.

She held it to her lips, the while she read his letter.

And so Baby's presence was not missed. At midday she rushed into the room and flung herself upon the bed with so much of her old impetuosity that Rosamond sat up, startled at first, then smiling, shaken from her languor.

'What is it, Baby? What a little face of blushes!'

In the midst of her own turmoil of emotion, Baby's faithful heart leaped with joy. Rosamond had not spoken with that natural air these months.

'What is it?' repeated the woman, smiling.

Aspasia edged along the bed till her hot cheeks were hidden on Rosamond's neck. Then she thrust out her left hand blindly for inspection.

'Look!'

'What——?'

Yes, in very truth, Rosamond was laughing.

'What is it, Baby? . . . Ah——'

Baby moved her long musician fingers slowly one after the other and finally stuck out the third.

'Ah,' cried Rosamond again, sharply.

'She has seen,' thought Aspasia, and was fain to raise her winsome countenance to behold the effect of the great surprise.

'Is it possible,' said the other, slowly, 'or are you playing me some trick?'

'A trick!' echoed Aspasia indignantly. 'No such thing!' She surveyed the important hand, with head on one side and an air of great complacency. Yet never had it appeared a more childish object. Upon the pink out-thrust finger the wedding-ring seemed absurdly misplaced.

'Baby, Baby, how is it you have never told me? Major Bethune, of course?'

'Yes,' said the bride, suddenly shy. 'They would not let me tell you. Idiots!'

The next instant the two women were clasped in each other's arms—both crying a little, as they kissed.

'There now,' cried the new wife, at last, awakening to the conviction that she was hardly carrying out the doctor's instructions: and, indeed, it was evident that, left to her own devices, Aspasia had peculiar views upon the art of breaking news. 'There now, this won't do. You lie still, and I'll tell you everything.'

Placidly enough to reassure a more anxious nurse, Rosamond obeyed, her hand creeping down to her letter once more. This was but a surface agitation, after all—there was only one in the world who had power to stir the deeps.

Aspasia knelt down by the bed, and began to pour forth her story. . . . They had been engaged, oh, ever so long; but she never would have dreamed of anything so preposterous as marriage, especially now—not for ages, at least, but Raymond had ramped so. . . .

It was only from the youthful Mrs. Bethune's picturesque tongue that such a description of Bethune's reticent wooing could have fallen.

And then something had happened, out there, and his blessed leave was curtailed, and, he had said, he positively would not go without her. 'And so,' said Baby, laughing and crying together, as pretty and absurd a spring bride as it was possible to see; 'so he came down from London yesterday—with a special licence in his pocket—he went to the Inn, but he came to see me last night. I don't know how it happened, but we were married this morning, at the

little church—you know, your little church, Aunt Rosamond. . . . Did you ever hear of such a thing? Without a trousseau, without a present, without a lawyer, without a cake! And I am going to Vienna for my honeymoon.'

She laughed a little wildly, and dabbed her wet cheeks with a corner of the sheet. Then she stopped suddenly, abashed. Rosamond's eyes were lost in space; she was not even listening.

'I knew you did not want me,' said Aspasia—a very different quality of tears welling up.

Rosamond started:

'I, not want you! Why, Baby, what makes you say that?'

'Oh,' cried the girl, with a swift change of mood, 'how can you want me, have you not got him? Dear Aunt Rosamond, darling Aunt Rosamond, don't keep him waiting any more!'

She was going to cast herself upon the bed in another fervent embrace, when something in Rosamond's look arrested her. Here were the deeps astir! It was as if a flame enkindled in a fragile lamp, as if she could see it tremble and burn.

She drew back before a mystery to which she vaguely felt she would never have the key.

'You know, he will return to-day,' stammered she at last. 'It's all right about his business. He is coming back.'

'I know,' answered Harry English's wife, in a low vibrating voice. Then she hesitated, and turned to look at the girl, a wistful inquiry in her shadowed eyes.

'Have they told him?' she asked, under her breath, raising one of the heavy white locks that lay across her breast.

'Oh,' exclaimed Aspasia leaping to her meaning, 'but you are beautiful with it, you are more beautiful than ever! No—I don't know if they've told him. Oh, darling,' she cried, melting all into tenderness, pity, and amusement, as over a child, 'it wasn't for that, it could not be for that, you wouldn't see him?'

'For that!' said Rosamond. A flame seemed to pass over her again. She quivered from head to foot, and a deep flush rose to the very roots of her blanched hair. 'Oh, Baby, no. How could you guess, how could you understand—poor little bride of an hour?'

And, as once before, upon that crucial morning in the distant Indian palace, she had taken all her golden hair to cover her face and hide its misery from violating eyes, Rosamond now swept the silver veil across the betrayal of her blood, that even Baby might not look upon the tumult of her heart.

The scent of the dark rose, stronger even than the lilies, filled the room.

Bethune carried off his bride unobtrusively—unromantically. Rosamond was still upstairs. And that no farewells should take place between her and Major Bethune fell out so naturally that even Baby scarcely commented upon it. Rosamond had always held herself so much aloof. That this procedure should have been planned by Bethune himself because he could not trust himself in this good-bye, would have been the last thought to enter the little wife's head; her Raymond had always rather disliked poor Aunt Rosamond than otherwise. Such was her conviction. He could never forgive her for having been his friend's forgetful widow.

She herself had shed torrents of easy tears of parting within the walls of the panelled bedroom; and had subsequently driven away beside the man of her choice (in the selfsame fly, smelling of straw, that had provoked her enthusiasm at arrival, her modest luggage atop), petulantly reviling her bridegroom for his inconsiderate hurry, the while nestling comfortably into the hollow of his shoulder.

How far was she from guessing at the complex emotions that made the heart, against which she leaned, beat so heavily; from guessing that this very haste, this wilfully informal departure, this quick marriage itself, were all part of the determined act of renunciation he had sealed in his soul, with the touch of her lips on his! Renunciation, it is true, of no more tangible passion than a thought. Yet, had she known, she need not have feared, for he who can renounce the insidious sweetness of a dream, need fear no overthrow from realities.

As for her, her marriage was the irresponsible mating of a little bird. And she was setting forth with as airy a freedom, with as busy and cheerful an importance, as any small winged lady of the woods on the flight to choose a favourable aspect for her nest.

As the vehicle wheeled out of the noiseless grassy avenue upon the moorland road, Bethune caught her to him, and kissed her with more of ardour than he had ever shown.

'And so, Robin,' said he, 'you are going to set all traditions at defiance, and pipe your pretty songs in the morning land.'

Mrs. Bethune smiled importantly; she still chose to keep up the fiction that in matrimony she by no means intended to give up her musical career, that career, with a capital C, that she had so

often flourished defiantly in Sir Arthur's face! But, in her heart, she knew very well that when she had let love enter in, it had driven forth ambition.

CHAPTER II.

A KEEN wind swept from the moor, shaking the sap of the drowsy orchard trees, setting the daffodil buds in the sheltered corners dancing, flecking the blue sky with sudden patches of cloud: a day typical of the bright, cruel, energies of youth, scurrying old tired mother earth into activity, ruthlessly eager to set her about her business and call up the joys of spring.

Saltwoods seemed very quiet and empty, standing alone with its memories, in the midst of this cheery bustle of the world without.

Rosamond wandered from room to room, restless alike from weakness and the strain of her dear, wonderful expectation. How long must she wait still? The opiate-effect of her languor had passed and it seemed to her that the suspense of these hours she could not endure. And then, all at once, behold, they had gone by!—The moment was at hand, and she was not ready.

She stood before the mirror, looking wistfully upon her white tresses. She wanted to appear beautiful in his eyes. But, alas! she had lost the golden crown of her woman's glory. . . . This grey dress that she had chosen, because some such colour had she worn upon the gorse-gold shore those many years ago, it was too pale, too cold, she thought, now that the sunshine of her hair had vanished.

Then she fancied she heard wheels, and caught the rose from her breast to thrust it haphazard into the waves that so strangely shaded in snow the delicate bloom of her face. And then, with the piteous coquetry of the woman who loves, she flung over that white head a scarf of lace, that he might not see too soon, that she might first have made him think her beautiful still, by a smile, a kiss.

But when she came to the door of the hall, there was no one. The wind and her impatience had but made mock of her. The avenue of swaying boughs was empty of all but the eager presence of the spring. She saw how the long grass bent, and whitened, and shivered; how a little unsuspected almond bush had burst into pink blossom among the hoary apple-trees; how, in the gusts, the rosy petals were already scattered abroad.

The panic that the heart knows in the absence of the beloved seized upon her. It was surely long past the time! Oh, God, was the cup to be dashed from their lips?

Frenzied with terror, she ran a pace or two down the avenue, to halt, panting in weakness—pressing her hand to her leaping breast. For a second everything swam before her. Then there came the moan of the gate swinging, and all her senses, strained beyond human limits, echoed to a distant footstep that yet made no sound upon the grass-grown way.

He came with great strides through the old ghost-like trees, whose withered boughs still held the swelling promise of the year's growth. He caught her in his arms, without a word. But she, like a child, clinging to him, cried, complaining:

'Oh, Harry, how late you are! Oh, how I have waited!'

'And I! . . . ' he made answer, almost inaudibly. 'Eight years!'

His lips were on her eyelids as he spoke.

At this she dropped her head upon his breast, hiding her face; but he could see the crimson creep to the edge of the lace kerchief. There was a slackening of her arms about him, almost as if she would have knelt at his feet—there, in the lonely bare orchard.

He kept her close with his embrace; he had to stoop to hear her stammered words:

'Forgive—I have been shamed.'

'Ah, hush!' cried he quickly, his low voice vibrating with that tenderness for which there is no utterance. 'Need there be this between us? Would I be here if I did not understand—if I did not know? . . . The music is mine, at last—the music, Rosamond, that you kept hidden, even from me. It is mine, at last—this is our wedding-day—the rest is nothing.'

He raised her quivering face and looked into her eyes, deep, deep. The kerchief fell back from her white hair; the perfume from the fading rose was wafted to his nostrils.

'Oh, my white rose!' he cried, and passionately kissed the beautiful blanched head. 'Oh, my red, red rose . . . your lips, at last, at last, Rose of the World!'

Thus was fulfilled in the barren home orchard, Harry English's Eastern dream. And there was not a lichened bough that March day but bore him a wealth of leaf and blossom.

SPECIAL POLICE COURTS FOR CHILDREN.

How curious is the phenomenon when it can be said that 'there is a reform in the air.' A sort of microbe seems to start simultaneously the same movement in the minds of various people, often without previous communication or contact. The demand made for the establishment of special police courts for children is an example. The Wage-earning Children's Committee, the Howard Association, the Humanitarian League, the Waifs and Strays Society, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board are each severally and by various methods pressing for this reform. In reply to a circular letter on the subject issued by the State Children's Association, and sent to clerks of education committees and their officers, and also to those who have made a scientific study of the problems surrounding child-life in our great cities, Dr. Barnardo speaks of the 'wisdom and extreme common sense of the arrangements of the Children's Courts in Boston, U.S.A.' Mr. Thomas Ackroyd, hon. secretary of the Boys' and Girls' Refuges and Homes in Manchester, advocates the need of separate courts of justice for children, 'instead of bringing them into the demoralising atmosphere of the ordinary police court'; the secretary of the Reformatory and Refuge Union states 'that the Union considers that separate courts of justice for children would be a great advantage in every way, and that they have urged the matter on the Home Office'; the Rev. B. Waugh, director of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, says that he has 'again and again urged the need for the adoption of a new court for children'—a consensus of experienced opinion which is gathered up in the report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration (issued July 1904), in which occur these words :

In all cases touching the young where the assistance of a magistrate is invoked he should, where possible, be a specially selected person sitting for the purpose.

Before, however, we consider reforms, it is well to be quite clear about existing conditions, and, in the hope that those of my readers who know all about the subject will pardon me, I propose, as the children say, to 'begin at the very beginning.'

First, then, in London, there are twenty-two police courts, and in 1903 (the last year for which figures are obtainable) 668 children were brought under arrest to these courts, besides the far larger number who were brought there under other conditions. On being arrested these children are taken to the police station, often placed in the cells for the night, and then brought up to the police court to be tried. In most cases, those charged with such offences as would involve their being committed to industrial schools are remanded to one of the three Remand Homes established by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, there to remain, sometimes for several weeks, making regular appearances in the police courts until vacancies have been found in industrial schools, to which they are then committed until they have reached the age of sixteen years.

Now the drawbacks to this method of procedure are manifold, and they may be classed under the following heads :

1. The committal of child-offenders on arrest to the police cells (where, if placed with other offenders, they must inevitably see and hear much that is unfit for them), and the detention of them there until their trial.

2. The trial of children in the ordinary police court, where they are placed in the dock as criminals (though they may only be charged with being destitute, with having played mischievously in the street, with trespassing, or with offences under the Education or Employment of Children Acts).

3. The presence of children in the courts during the hearing of other charges, many of them of a sad and often defiling nature.

Concerning the drawbacks under the first head, some of the facts are well given by that children's champion, Miss Nettie Adler. She says :

Every child who is arrested by a police or by an industrial schools officer must, in the first instance, be taken to a police-station to be charged. If it is early in the day, he is then brought before a magistrate and formally committed to the Remand Home. If, however, the child is charged after four o'clock in the afternoon, he must remain all night at the police-station, and if he is so unfortunate as to be arrested on a Saturday, he will be compelled to pass both Saturday and Sunday nights in a police-station cell. Occasionally such children are guarded in the waiting-room. In some few instances, a sympathetic inspector will bring the forlorn little soul upstairs to his own quarters. But it will be realised how seldom this can be done with due safety to the kind-hearted official's own household, when we remember that often on admission to the Remand Home the child's clothing has to be burnt forthwith. Frequently, therefore, small boys and girls have to spend a night in the cold, gloom, and loneliness of a police-cell, perhaps with very inadequate covering.

It has often been said to me : ' Surely, Mrs. Barnett, a child used to the Whitechapel streets and common lodging-houses will not be injured by a night in the cells, or contaminated by an hour or two in the police courts.' Now, even if the children brought to the police courts were all of the degraded class, that is no justification for further officially sanctioned degradation. But many of the children who appear are not members of the criminal classes of society. As the law now stands, there is no place other than the police courts where children have to apply if their birth certificates are required, or if they desire a theatrical licence ; while all children found wandering, or destitute, or without a fixed home, or consorting with bad characters, have to be brought there for protection or correction. That there is a large number of such cases is shown by the following figures : Of 417 children who passed through the Pentonville Remand Home during the first four months of the current year, 187 had been taken before the Bench merely because they were found to be destitute, or were discovered to be living with degraded associates. At the Camberwell Remand Home the proportion was about the same ; ninety-two out of 224 children had been placed in the home through no fault of their own. In 1902 the three homes of the Metropolitan Asylums Board received 1,786 boys and 235 girls, and the causes of their arrest were as follows :

In 621 cases, felony (various forms of theft for the most part).

In 165 cases, larceny.

In 274 cases, begging.

In 504 cases, wandering, or without visible means.

In 154 cases, beyond control, or not under control of parents.

In 73 cases, living in houses of ill-fame.

In 11 cases, sleeping out.

Of these, 503 were discharged, forty-six birched, eighty-one fined or ' bound over,' forty-five were handed over to the police-court missionary, and 819 were sent to reformatory or industrial schools, while the ultimate disposal of 440 was entered as ' unknown.'

With regard to the evils under the second and third heads, Mr. Lowrey says, in his article on ' The Criminal Boy ' in the volume written for the Toynbee Trust :

A serious matter is the defenceless position of the boy when he is on his trial. He may be guilty or he may not. It is certain that appearances are against him, or he would not have been arrested. In any case, it lies with him to prove his

innocence. How is he to do it? He is young, probably ill-educated, and inexperienced. It is impossible for him to present his case properly. The odds are enormously in favour of his being guilty, but the point is that he has not a fair chance of defending himself.

Another writer, in the 'Guardian,' describes the facts thus :

Occasionally the children are guarded in the gaoler's room or the waiting-room. More often they are seated in the court itself until their cases are heard; and, although efforts are made, more especially in the metropolitan area, to deal with these as early in the day as possible, they are yet often detained until after the night charges are taken, until two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and may be present while the details of some of those cases of drunkenness and brutality are heard which are such a blot on our civilisation. It must be remembered, too, that the same treatment is meted out to little ones of seven and eight years old as is bestowed on the depraved and sodden in crime. They all stand in the prisoner's dock. The figure of a mite of seven, whose little face scarcely reached the iron bar, will always haunt the writer: his only crime was absolute destitution. He had been found wandering, he had no parents, and his married sister had turned him out of her house. And there he stood, pale, frightened, scarcely understanding what went on around him. One could only hope that the sheltering walls of the industrial school might make some reparation for the past, though one wished that he had been going to some kindly woman's home rather than to an institution.

To render these evils a matter of history only, the most needed reform is now the establishment, in London and in all large provincial towns, of courts especially set apart for children's cases. It is noteworthy that in this matter we can go forward fearlessly, for our own colonies, as well as America, have shown us what to aim for and what to avoid.

In Australia, children's courts were established fifteen years ago—1890. In Canada, an Act of 1894 provided for almost all we now ask, and in Toronto there is a special court for the hearing of all juvenile applications. In America, Massachusetts, which has so often led the way in wise action with regard to educational matters, established children's courts as far back as 1863; and a few days ago I received from my old young friend, Mr. A. Edmund Spender, a long letter describing how he had been impressed with the system when, as a member of the Moseley Commission, he had been called to investigate it. In New Zealand and New South Wales legislation is pending to establish these courts; but England, with her vast population, her numerous waif children, her wealth, and her continuous talk on education, has as yet done nothing—nothing, I should say, as a whole, though Dublin, Bury, Bolton, Bradford, and Manchester have either taken or are about to take steps so

that in future all 'children's cases shall be heard in places separate and apart from adults.'

So far, I am sure, I have carried with me the sympathy of my readers. It is almost self-evident that children should not be contaminated by knowledge of evil. It seems to need no arguing that those who have to come in contact with the law—themselves being law-abiding—should not suffer the pains or injury of association with the degraded. But this is not all. The reform which would prevent such evils, important as it is, seems almost trivial in comparison with the still greater and more far-reaching reform which would almost necessarily follow the establishment of special courts of justice for children, and 'the appointment of a magistrate, who should be a specially selected person, sitting for the purpose.'

Again, however, before we consider reforms, it is well that we should clearly understand the present conditions. There are in England and Wales 139 industrial schools, accommodating 13,930 boys and 4,656 girls. These industrial schools are, be it noted, under, not the Education Department, but the Home Office, which has the control of prisons, inebriate homes, and reformatories. They are, in short, prison-schools, entered only through the police courts, by sentence of the magistrate, the term of confinement ending with the legal termination of childhood—i.e. sixteen years. Those little chaps of seven or eight, the small maids of nine and ten, with their wistful faces and eyes full of love-hunger or world-defiance—where must they be sent? Not, as all of us who care for little children would like to believe, to some 'kindly woman's home,' but to an institution based on the foundation thought of discipline and restraint, that being what some educationalists considered is required for naughty, lawless lads of fourteen and fifteen, but not for poor bairns of seven, whose only crime is orphanage, whose sole sin it is to be 'utterly destitute.' To subject these mites to repressive discipline for seven, eight, or nine years is to wrong them. They want kissing at that age, not drilling; petticoats, not labour masters.

There is another evil attached to the present system, as to which I will quote Miss Isabella Baker, one of the veteran public workers of London, herself a guardian and also a member of the Metropolitan Asylums Board:

Children [she says] are brought again and again into court, for the magistrates cannot remand them for a longer period than a week, and they come back

to the Remand Homes with their little brains stuffed full of the horrible and nauseous things they have heard in court.

The pith of that sentence is that the children appear 'again and again' in the court, remanded week after week, and the reason is because they are waiting until the busy court officer can find a vacancy in one of the 139 industrial schools, and a place for these unwanted waifs among the other 18,586 children already treated as semi-criminal.

Now, with the best will in the world (and the kindness and humanity of some of the officials is beyond human praise), it is not possible for each of the twenty-two metropolitan stipendiary magistrates so to keep in touch with these 139 institutions as to know which is best suited for the character, the age, fault, disposition, health, of the small culprit before him. He can but remand him or her until there is time for inquiry. If in London, or in towns large enough to require it, special courts were established solely for children's cases, the magistrate, the clerk, the officers would make children's interests their chief consideration, and set themselves to ascertain the educational methods and the especial treatment most likely to cherish the smoking flax of good which is to be found in the most depraved of young humans.

The results of such a change may be classed under four heads :

- I. The confidence of charitable agencies.
- II. Knowledge of existing institutions.
- III. Uniformity of action, which the poor could understand.
- IV. Experience of the success or failure of different educational methods.

I. The Confidence of Charitable Agencies dealing with Children.

What a number of children I should have taken to the courts in my thirty-three years of Whitechapel life had I been able to have trust in the magistrate's knowledge and experience !

I can recall Sydney Cowan, aged eleven, the eldest of four children. His father, a drear man, always out of work, not so much from idleness as from discontent—this work unworthy of his powers, that employer indifferent to his potentialities, jealous of others' success, he was always on the look-out for 'something suitable,' meanwhile taking his 'full share of his victuals and drink,' partly to ensure his being fit when the desired job did

present itself, partly to vindicate his right to his wife, and all she was and had, including her earnings, for she it was who supported herself, him, the home, and the four children by slaving at a laundry. Sydney was a curious lad. Mentally bright, he was morally dull; physically industrious, he was intellectually idle; calculatingly selfish, he was yet capable of chivalrous affection. But, his parents away all day, mischief presented itself as attractive, and during the many hours that were not school hours he introduced himself and the three younger ones to bad companions and worse ways. 'The officer had better have him,' said the father; and the officer finally got him, and for five years the country supported that lad, to the relief of his ne'er-do-well father, to the raising of the rates, and to the injury of the spirit of independence of the neighbours.

Polly Leary's mother was a widow, young, nearly blind, and had begging in her bones. Polly was six when I first had the privilege of her acquaintance, with the bewitching blue eyes and black hair of our sister-islanders, well-grown, coy, mischievous, curious, affectionate, self-willed, energetic, greedy—a little bit of human nature that required delicate handling to produce any good, and yet capable of noble activities.

One of the practices of the St. Jude's parish committee was to organise not only relief but efforts, and so employment was found for Mrs. Leary, which, with a weekly grant, would have enabled her to keep a one-roomed home for Polly and herself. But she would not do it, preferring begging under the name of gutter-tray hawking, and when she picked up the acquaintances of people who 'kindly offered to treat her' she drifted downwards. She did not live a declaredly immoral life, and with the aid of a worthy north-country brother, who saw only her misfortunes, and those through magnifying-glasses, she was enabled to keep her room. But she was a bad mother to Polly. If ever a child needed the discipline of an industrial school she did, but 'discharged' was the verdict of the magistrate, whose manifold duties did not allow him to give time to so complicated a tangle of humanity and town civilisation. The end of Polly is what I do not care to write. 'End' have I said, but that is not true; the end of her life, even in this world, is not yet, and the marvellous, unflagging patience of Mother Emma and her sisterhood, the controlling influences of work under discipline, the stimulating effect of motherhood (although unhallowed), and the atmosphere of living piety with

which she is surrounded may yet work a miracle. But the pity of it!

Oh, the little more, and how much it is!
And the little less, and what worlds away!

Polly might have been saved from committing and causing sin, and Sydney should have had a sharp, short sentence to a punishment school, and should then have been released under the probation officer, whose legal position would have given him just that power with the parents which would have shaken some of the self-complacency out of the father, and done something to sustain the mother's rule over the other children. No one is to blame. The magistrate, the officer, the missionary—all do their best possible. It is the system which is wrong, alike to those who work it, those who suffer from it, and those who pay for it.

II. Knowledge of Existing Institutions.

The 139 industrial schools differ greatly. They may be large or small. Some depend on strict government, others on wise guidance. Some carry discipline almost to hardship; others depend on awakening in children, by interest in handicraft or trade learning, a desire to reform and do well. In some the training and management are best suited to younger children; in others, to elder lads or girls. Some are controlled by committees of alert and intelligent managers; others are under the care of moribund, indolent, or self-satisfied boards of management, who are content to leave all trouble and responsibility to the officers. In some schools child labour is used for the benefit of the trades which are carried on for the maintenance of the institution, a system which allows grave evils to exist; in others, the work of the children is mainly educational. Some are, in towns, so closely surrounded by buildings as to be playgroundless, and others are well placed in open country. It is necessary that the magistrate should know all the facts about every school, its situation, characteristics, management, changes of staff, developments, and last, but not least, its vacancies, so each child would at once be consigned to the institution best suited to its age, antecedents, health, nature, or fault. Thus time and money in conveyance would be saved, and the children would not have to come back 'again and again' to the court-house, to their own injury and to the cost of the exchequer.

III. *Uniformity of Action, which the Poor could Understand.*

The poor are scholars in Nature's school; they know the invariableness of her law and are patient under punishment. Variable laws seem to them to be unjust, and give them false guidance. The ways of magistrates are variable; one dismisses, one inflicts fines, another imprisons. In the provinces in 1902-3, 1,034 boys and twenty-nine girls were convicted, and more than half of these were committed to prison in default of payment of a fine. One boy, under sixteen, had been to prison thirty times, and had had forty-one convictions. Sometimes the magistrates discharge the cases so frequently as to discourage children being brought before them. Sometimes they commit most of the juveniles brought before them to industrial schools, a wholesale dealing with retail cases which is unworthy of the human justice which implies intelligence and sympathy.

IV. *Experience of the Success or Failure of different Educational Methods.*

Humanity is so complex, especially child humanity, that only experience can tell what will succeed or fail. The magistrates and officers of a special court would gain this experience, and would be able to direct changes in the class of provision for such children. Their knowledge would help the inspectors of the Home Office, and without claiming the gift of prophecy it is, I think, safe to say that one of the first reforms that would be advocated would be the provision of probation officers. That system has been variously defined and described. One American writer speaks of it as a 'system of enlisting the child's interest in his own reform.' Miss Hughes, whose pamphlet¹ on it is most interesting, says: 'The probation system may be briefly described as an attempt to reform a prisoner outside prison.' In the Wage-earning Children's Committee's memorandum it is described thus:

Under this system youthful delinquents are allowed by the justices of the Children's Courts to return to their parents on probation, while probation officers, usually women, are appointed by the Court to watch over the children, to visit them at their homes, and to report on their progress and conduct from time to time. If the delinquents are beyond school age, employment is found for them and means are taken to interest employers in their welfare. In all but a very small proportion of cases this action obviates the need for committal to industrial and reformatory schools.

¹ Published by the Howard Association.

Of the success of the work of the probation officers there can be little doubt, and it is generally acknowledged that it is their labours which have so reduced the number of child prisoners in the United States. For instance, previous to the enactment of the Juvenile Court law in Chicago, about 600 children out of the 1,300 charged with offences were committed every year to the county gaol, besides those who were confined from time to time in police cells and stations. Since the appointment of the probation officers, however, of about 1,300 children actually brought before that court per annum, *under twelve each year* are now committed to gaol.

In Philadelphia the figures are even more remarkable :

*Official Report from Court Records, June 14, 1901, to
November 1, 1902.*

Delinquents	1,112
Returned home on probation	1,008
Charged again, twice	24
Charged again, three times	3
Sent to houses of refuge	104

The advantages to the children of thus enabling them by good conduct to earn their right to freedom are self-evident, if also subtle, but the advantages to the State and to the ratepayer must not be overlooked. I have known bad parents deliberately tempt their children to steal their own money, and then send for the officer, have them arrested, and themselves give evidence against them, congratulating themselves to their intimates that they have got relieved of their offspring and their responsibilities to them. The cost to the ratepayer of supporting some 18,000 children, at certainly not less than £20 a year for each child, is easily reckoned, an expenditure no child-lover or patriot would object to if it were the best for the child or the country. But is it? Does not experience prove that the establishment of probation officers is 'the more excellent way'?

That the probation officers should be persons not only of high character, but of special knowledge of and care for child nature, is essential. Mrs. Schoff, the president of the United States Congress of Mothers, thus describes what is needed :

Child study, psychology, as related to the characteristics and development of various stages of childhood, a study of penology and sociology, and such legal training as is required for the presentation of cases, combined with common sense and a consecrated love for the children, are requisites for good probation work. The entire time of the officer, and individual care and thought for each

child, are essential to satisfactory probation work. An officer, therefore, must not have too many cases under his or her care. Our officers are women. Dealing as they do with the child and the mother, they come, we hold, into closer relations than can a man, for child care is ever women's work, the mother's work which the world needs.

Hastily must we return from America to consider our own country and its needs. Sir Howard Vincent is introducing a Bill into Parliament, backed by Mr. Samuel Smith, Sir John Gorst, and Mr. Tennant, and supported by the State Children's Association and kindred bodies, the object of which is the establishment of children's courts of justice. As it stands it will not accomplish much, but it may be amended, or rather developed, in committee, and if it succeeds in legally securing and providing payment for arrangements by which children's cases can be heard apart from those of adults, and if it enables the thought of the magistrates to be more focussed on the young and their educational needs, it can be reasonably expected that the appointment of probation officers will ultimately follow. Perhaps in the beginning charity-money will have to pay for such officers, but as their work proves their value it will surely be borne home, even to unthinking people, that it is cheaper to pay one woman £150 a year to reform, by personal care, eighty children than it is to support those eighty children in institutions at the rate of £1,600 a year.

'It is,' writes Judge Lindsey, of Denver, 'the purpose of our law to protect children from being stigmatised with conviction as criminals, and by letter and spirit to constantly encourage them to personal work and effort.'

An experience of thousands of children [says another American expert on this subject] has proved conclusively that there is no *criminal* class of children. A child's environment, lack of home care, and neglect may lead him into crime, but in each we find the germ of good, and to quicken and develop it is our work. Punishment does not accomplish this. Education, help, love, and patient stimulation of the better instincts can alone develop the germ. We do not consider the crime, we consider the child, and we have saved those whom even the reform schools feared to take, considering them prodigies of crime. We also encourage parental responsibility, and provide help and instruction for ignorant, careless parents.

With this testimony of experience, now extending over many years, are we in England still to linger behind, and go on treating as criminals the children in whom is the hope of the nation?

HENRIETTA O. BARNETT.

ALETHEA-BELLE.¹

BY HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

In the early eighties, when my brother Ajax and I were raising cattle in the foothills of Southern California, our ranch-house was used as a stopping-place by the teamsters hauling freight across the Coast Range; and after the boom began, while the village of Preston was evolving itself out of rough timber, we were obliged to furnish all comers with board and lodging. Hardly a day passed without some 'prairie schooner' (the canvas-covered wagon of the squatter) creaking into our corral; and the quiet gulches and cañons where Ajax and I had shot quail and deer began to re-echo to the shouts of the children of the rough folk from the mid-West and Missouri. These 'Pikers,' so called, settled thickly upon the sage-brush hills to the south and east of us, and took up all the land they could claim from the Government. Before spring was over, we were asked to lend an old *adobe* building to the village fathers, to be used as a schoolhouse, until the schoolhouse proper was built. At that time a New England family of the name of Spafford was working for us. Mrs. Spafford, having two children of her own, tried to enlist our sympathies.

'I'm kinder sick,' she told us, 'of cookin' an' teachin'; an' the hot weather's comin' on, too. You'd oughter let 'em hev that old *adobe*.'

'But who will teach the children?' we asked.

'We've fixed that,' said Mrs. Spafford. ''Tain't everyone as 'd want to come into this wilderness, but my auntie's cousin, Alethea-Belle Buchanan, is willin' to take the job.'

'Is she able?' we asked doubtfully.

'She's her father's daughter,' Mrs. Spafford replied. 'Abram Buchanan was as fine an' brave a man as ever preached the Gospel. An' clever, too. My sakes, he never done but one foolish thing, and that was when he merried his wife.'

'Tell us about her,' said that inveterate gossip, Ajax.

Mrs. Spafford sniffed.

'I seen her once—that was once too much fer me. One o'

¹ Copyright, 1905, by Horace Annesley Vachell, in the United States of America.

them lackadaisical, wear-a-wrapper-in-the-mornin', soft, pulpy Southerners. Pretty—yes, in a spindlin', pink an' white soon-washed-out pattern, but without backbone. I've no patience with sech.'

'Her daughter won't be able to halter-break these wild colts.'

'Didn't I say that Alethea-Belle took after her father? She must hev consid'able snap an' nerve, fer she's put in the last year, sence Abram died, in sellin' books in this State.'

'A book agent?'

'Yes, sir, a book agent.'

If Mrs. Spafford had said road agent, which means highwayman in California, we could not have been more surprised. A successful book agent must have the hide of a rhinoceros, the guile of a serpent, the obstinacy of a mule, and the persuasive notes of a nightingale.

'If Miss Buchanan has been a book agent, she'll do,' said Ajax.

She arrived at Preston on the ramshackle old stage-coach late one Saturday afternoon. Ajax and I carried her small hair-trunk into the ranch-house; Mrs. Spafford received her. We retreated to the corrals.

'She'll never, *never* do,' said Ajax.

'Never,' said I.

Alethea-Belle Buchanan looked about eighteen; and her face was white as the dust that lay thick upon her grey linen cloak. Under the cloak we had caught a glimpse of a thin, slab-chested figure. She wore thread gloves, and said 'I thank you' in a prim, New England accent.

'Depend upon it, she's had pie for breakfast ever since she was born,' said Ajax, 'and it's not agreed with her. She'll keep a foothill school in order just about two minutes—and no longer!'

At supper, however, she surprised us. She was very plain-featured, but the men—the rough teamsters, for instance—could not keep their eyes off her. She was the most amazing mixture of boldness and timidity I had ever met. We were about to plump ourselves down at table, for instance, when Miss Buchanan, folding her hands and raising her eyes, said grace; but to our first questions she replied, blushing, in timid monosyllables.

After supper, Mrs. Spafford and she washed up. Later, they brought their sewing into the sitting-room. While we were trying to thaw the little schoolmarm's shyness, a mouse ran across the

floor. In an instant Miss Buchanan was on her chair. The mouse ran round the room and vanished ; the girl who had been sent to Preston to keep in order the turbulent children of the foothills stepped down from her chair.

‘I’m scared to death of mice,’ she confessed.

My brother Ajax scowled.

‘Fancy sending that whey-faced little coward—*here!*’ he whispered to me.

‘Have you taught school before?’ I asked.

‘Oh, yes, indeed,’ she answered; ‘and I know something of your foothill folks. I’ve been a book agent. Oh, indeed? You know that. Well, I did first-rate, but that was the book, which sold itself—a beautiful book. Maybe you know it—“The Milk of Human Kindness”? When we’re better acquainted, I’d like to read you,’ she looked hard at Ajax, ‘some o’ my favourite passages.’

‘Thanks,’ said Ajax stiffly.

Next day was Sunday. At breakfast the schoolmarm asked Ajax if there was likely to be a prayer-meeting.

‘A prayer-meeting, Miss Buchanan?’

‘It’s the Sabbath, you know.’

‘Yes—er—so it is. Well, you see,’ he smiled feebly, ‘the cathedral isn’t built yet.’

‘Why, what’s the matter with the schoolhouse? I presume you’re all church-members?’

Her grey eyes examined each of us in turn, and each made confession. One of the teamsters was a Baptist; another a Latter-day Adventist; the Spaffords were Presbyterians; we, of course, belonged to the Church of England.

‘We ought to have a prayer-meeting,’ said the little schoolmarm.

‘Yes; we did oughter,’ assented Mrs. Spafford.

‘I kin pray first-rate whin I git started,’ said the Baptist teamster.

The prayer-meeting took place. Afterwards Ajax said to me:

‘She’s very small, is whey-face, but somehow she seemed to fill the *adobe*.’

In the afternoon we had an adventure which gave us further insight into the character and temperament of the new schoolmarm.

We all walked to Preston across the home pasture, for Miss Buchanan was anxious to inspect the site—there was nothing else

then—of the proposed schoolhouse. Her childlike simplicity and assurance in taking for granted that she would eventually occupy that unbuilt academy struck us as pathetic.

‘I give her one week,’ said Ajax, ‘not a day more.’

Coming back we called a halt under some willows near the creek. The shade invited us to sit down.

‘Are there snakes—rattlesnakes?’ Miss Buchanan asked nervously.

‘In the brush-hills—yes; here—no,’ replied my brother.

By a singular coincidence, the words were hardly out of his mouth when we heard the familiar warning, the whirring, never-to-be-forgotten sound of the beast known to the Indians as ‘death in the grass.’

‘Mercy!’ exclaimed the schoolmarm, staring wildly about her. It is not easy to localise the exact position of a coiled rattlesnake by the sound of his rattle.

‘Don’t move!’ said Ajax. ‘Ah, I see him! There he is! I must find a stick.’

The snake was coiled some half-dozen yards from us. Upon the top coil was poised his hideous head; above it vibrated the bony, fleshless vertebræ of the tail. The little schoolmarm stared at the beast, fascinated by fear and horror. Ajax cut a switch from a willow; then he advanced, smiling.

‘Oh!’ entreated Miss Buchanan, ‘please don’t go so near.’

Ajax stopped laughing.

‘There’s no danger,’ he said. ‘I’ve never been able to understand why rattlers inspire such terror. They can’t strike except at objects within half their length, and one little tap, as you will see, breaks their backbone. Now watch! I’m going to provoke this chap to strike; and then I shall kill him.’

He held the end of the stick about eighteen inches from the glaring, lidless eyes. With incredible speed the poised head shot forth. Ajax laughed. The snake was recoiling, as he struck it on the neck. Instantly it writhed impotently. My brother set the heel of his heavy boot upon the skull, crushing it into the ground.

‘Now let’s sit down,’ said he.

‘Hark!’ cried the little schoolmarm.

Another snake was rattling within a yard or two of the first.

‘It’s the mate,’ said I. ‘At this time of year they run in pairs. We ought to have thought of that.’

‘I’ll have him in a jiffy,’ said my brother.

As he spoke I happened to be watching the schoolmarm. Her face was painfully white, but her eyes were shining, and her lips set above a small, resolute chin.

'Let me kill him,' she said, in a low voice.

'You, Miss Buchanan?'

'Yes.'

'It's easy enough, but one mustn't—er—miss.'

'I sha'n't miss.'

She took the willow stick from my brother's hand. Every movement of his she reproduced exactly, even to the setting of her heel upon the serpent's head. Then she smiled at us apologetically.

'I hated to do it. I was scared to death, but I wanted to conquer that cowardly Belle. It's just as you say, they're killed mighty easy. If we could kill the Old Serpent as easy——' she sighed, not finishing the sentence.

Ajax, who has a trick of saying what others think, blurted out:

'What do you mean by conquering—Belle?'

We sat down.

'My name is Alethea-Belle, a double name. Father wanted to call me Alethea; but mother fancied Belle. Father, you know, was a Massachusetts minister; mother came from way down south. She died when I was a child. She—she was not very strong, poor mother, but father,' she spoke proudly, 'father was the best man that ever lived.'

All her self-consciousness had vanished. Somehow we felt that the daughter of the New England parson was speaking, not the child of the invertebrate Southerner.

'I had to take to selling books,' she continued, speaking more to herself than to us, 'because of Belle. That miserable girl got into debt. Father left her a little money. Belle squandered it sinfully on clothes and pleasure. She'd a rose silk dress——'

'A rose silk dress,' repeated Ajax.

'It was just too lovely—that dress,' said the little schoolmarm, reflectively.

'Even Alethea could not resist that,' said I.

She blushed, and her shyness, her awkwardness, returned.

'Alethea had to pay for it,' she replied primly. 'I ask your pardon for speaking so foolishly and improperly of—myself.'

After this, behind her back, Ajax and I invariably called her Alethea-Belle.

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School began at nine sharp the next morning. We expected a large attendance, and were not disappointed. Some of the boys grinned broadly when Alethea-Belle appeared carrying books and maps. She looked absurdly small, very nervous, and painfully frail. The fathers present exchanged significant glances; the mothers sniffed. Alethea-Belle entered the names of her scholars in a neat ledger, and shook hands with each. Then she made a short speech.

'Friends,' she said, 'I'm glad to make your acquaintance. I shall expect my big boys and girls to set an example to the little ones by being punctual, clean, and obedient. We will now begin our exercises with prayer and a hymn. After that the parents will please retire.'

That evening Alethea-Belle went early to bed with a raging headache. Next morning she appeared whiter than ever, but her eyelids were red. However, she seemed self-possessed and even cheerful. Riding together across the range, Ajax said to me: 'Alethea-Belle is scared out of her life.'

'You mean Belle. Alethea is as brave as her father was before her.'

'You're right. Poor little Belle! Perhaps we'd better find some job or other round the *adobe* this afternoon. There'll be ructions.'

But the ructions did not take place that day. It seems that Alethea-Belle told her scholars she was suffering severely from headache. She begged them politely to be as quiet as possible. Perhaps amazement constrained obedience.

'These foothill imps will kill her,' said Ajax.

Within a week we knew that the big boys were becoming unmanageable, but no such information leaked from Alethea-Belle's lips. Each evening at supper we asked how she had fared during the day. Always she replied primly: 'I thank you; I'm getting along nicely, better than I expected.'

Mrs. Spafford, a peeper through doors and keyholes, explained the schoolmarm's methods.

'I jest happened to be passin' by,' she told me, 'and I peaked in through—through the winder. That great big hoodlum of a George Spragg was a-sassin' Miss Buchanan an' makin' faces at her. The crowd was a-whoopin' him up. In the middle o' the uproar she kneels down. "O Lord," says she, "I pray Thee to soften the heart of pore George Spragg, and give me, a weak woman,

the strength to prevail against his everlastin' ignorance and foolishness!" George got the colour of a beet, but he quit his foolin'. 'Yes, sir, she prays for 'em, and she coaxes 'em, an' she never knows when she's beat; but they'll be too much for her. She's losin' her appetite, an' she don't sleep good. We won' be boardin' her much longer.'

But that night, as usual, when I asked Alethea-Belle how she did, she replied, in her prim, formal accents: 'I'm doing real well, I thank you; much, *much* better than I expected.'

Two days later I detected a bruise upon her forehead. With great difficulty I extracted the truth. Tom Eubanks had thrown an apple at the schoolmarm.

'And what did you do?'

Her grey eyes were unruffled, her delicately cut lips never smiled, as she replied austere: 'I told Thomas that I was sure he meant well, but that if a boy wished to give an apple to a lady he'd ought to hand it politely, and not throw it. Then I ate the apple. It was a Newtown pippin, and real good. After recess Thomas apologised.'

'What did the brute say?'

'He is not a brute. He said he was sorry he'd thrown the pippin so hard.'

Next day I happened to meet Tom Eubanks. He had a basket of Newtown pippins for the schoolmarm. He was very red when he told me that Miss Buchanan liked—apples. Apples at that time did not grow in the brush-hills. Tom had bought them at the village store.

But Alethea-Belle grew thinner and whiter.

Just before the end of the term the climax came. I happened to find the little schoolmarm crying bitterly in a clump of sage-brush near the water-troughs.

'It's like this,' she confessed presently: 'I can't rid myself of that weak, hateful Belle. She's going to lie down soon, and let the boys trample on her; then she'll have to quit. And Alethea sees the Promised Land. Oh, oh! I do despise the worst half of myself!'

'The sooner you leave these young devils the better.'

'What do you say?'

She confronted me with flashing eyes. I swear that she looked beautiful. The angularities, the lack of colour, the thin chest, the stooping back were effaced. I could not see them, because—well,

because I was looking through them, far beyond them, at something else.

'I love my boys, my foothill boys; and if they are rough, brutal at times, they're *strong*.' Her emphasis on the word was pathetic. 'They're strong, and they're young, and they're poised for flight—*now*. To me, me, has been given the opportunity to direct that flight—upward, and if I fail them, if I quit——' She trembled violently.

'You won't quit,' said I, with conviction.

'To-morrow,' said she, 'they've fixed things for a real battle.'

She refused obstinately to tell me more, and obtained a solemn promise from me that I would not interfere.

Afterwards I got most of the facts out of George Spragg. Three of the biggest boys had planned rank mutiny. Doubtless they resented a compulsory attendance at school, and with short-sighted policy made certain that if they got rid of Alethea-Belle the school-house would be closed for ever. And what chance could she have—one frail girl against three burly young giants?

A full attendance warned her that her scholars expected something interesting to happen. Boys and girls filed into the school-room quietly enough, and the proceedings opened with prayer, but not the usual prayer. Alethea-Belle prayed fervently that right might prevail against might, now, and for ever. Amen.

Within a minute the three mutineers had marched into the middle of the room. In loud, ear-piercing notes they began to sing 'Pull for the Shore.' The girls giggled nervously; the boys grinned; several opened their mouths to sing, but closed them again as Alethea-Belle descended from the rostrum and approached the rebels. The smallest child knew that a fight to a finish had begun.

The schoolmarm raised her thin hand and her thin voice. No attention was paid to either. Then she walked swiftly to the door and locked it. The old *adobe* had been built at a time when Indian raids were common in Southern California. The door was of oak, very massive; the windows, narrow openings in the thick walls, were heavily barred. The children wondered what was about to happen. The three rebels sang with a louder, more defiant note as Alethea-Belle walked past them and on to the rostrum. Upon her desk stood a covered basket. Taking this in her hand, she came back to the middle of the room. The boys eyed her movements curiously. She carried, besides the basket, a cane. Alethea

bent down and placed the basket between herself and the boys. They still sang 'Pull for the Shore,' but faintly, feebly. They stared hard at the basket and the cane. Alethea-Belle stood back, with a curious expression upon her white face; then swiftly she flicked open the lid of the basket. Silence fell on the scholars.

Out of the basket, very slowly, very stealthily, came the head of a snake, a snake well known to the smallest child—known and dreaded. The flat head, the lidless, baleful eyes, the grey-green, diamond-barred skin of the neck were unmistakable.

'It's a rattler!' shrieked one of the rebels.

They sprang back; the other children rose, panic-stricken. The schoolmarm spoke very quietly:

'Don't move! The snake will not hurt any of you.'

As she spoke she flicked again the lid of the basket. It fell on the head of the serpent. Alethea-Belle touched the horror, which withdrew. Then she picked up the basket, secured the lid, and spoke to the huddled-up, terrified crowd:

'You tried to scare me, didn't you, and I have scared you.' She laughed pleasantly, but with a faint inflection of derision, as if she knew, as she did, that the uncivilised children of the foothills, like their fathers, fear nothing on earth so much as rattlers and—ridicule. After a moment she continued: 'I brought this here to-day as an object-lesson. You loathe and fear the serpent in this basket, as I loathe and fear the serpent which is in you.' She caught the eyes of the mutineers and held them. 'And,' her eyes shone, 'I believe that I have been sent to kill the evil in you, as I am going to kill this venomous beast. Stand back!'

They shrank back against the walls, open-eyed, open-mouthed, trembling. Alethea-Belle unfastened for the second time the lid of the basket; once more the flat head protruded, hissing. Alethea-Belle struck sharply.

'It is harmless now,' she said quietly; 'its back is broken.'

But the snake still writhed. Alethea-Belle shuddered; then she set her heel firmly upon the head.

'And now'—her voice was weak and quavering, but a note of triumph, of mastery, informed it—'and now I am going to cane you three boys; I am going to try to break your stubborn wills; but you are big and strong, and you must let me do it. If you don't let me do it, you will break my heart, for if I am too weak to command here, I must resign. Oh, I wish that I were strong!'

The mutineers stared at each other, at the small white face confronting them, at the boys and girls about them. It was a

great moment in their lives, an imperishable experience. The biggest spoke first, sheepishly, roughly, almost defiantly :

‘Come on up, boys ; we’ll hev to take a lickin’ this time.’

Alethea-Belle went back to the rostrum, trembling. She had never caned a boy before, and she loathed violence. And yet she gave those three lads a sound thrashing. When the last stroke was given, she tottered and fell back upon her chair—senseless.

Later, I asked her how she had caught the snake.

‘After you left me,’ she said, ‘I sat down to think. I knew that the boys wanted to scare me, and it struck me what a splendid thing ’twould be to scare them. Just then I saw the snake asleep on the rocks ; and I remembered what one o’ the cowboys had said about their being stupid and sluggish at this time o’ year. But my ! when it came to catching it alive—I—nearly had a fit. I’d chills and fever before I was able to brace up. Well, sir, I got me a long stick, and I fixed a noose at the end of it ; and somehow—with the Lord’s help—I got the creature into my work-basket ; and I carried it home, and put it under my bed, with a big stone atop o’ the lid. But I never slept a wink. I’m teetotal, but I know now what it is to have the—the——’

‘Jim-jams,’ said I.

‘I believe that’s what they call it in California. Yes, I saw snakes, *rattlers*, everywhere !’

‘You’re the pluckiest little woman in the world,’ said I.

‘Oh, no ! I’m a miserable coward, and always will be. Now it’s over I kind of wish I hadn’t scared the little children quite so bad.’

About a month later, when Alethea-Belle was leaving us and about to take up new quarters in Preston, near the just finished village schoolhouse, Mrs. Spafford came to me. The schoolmarm, it seemed, had stepped off our scales. She had gained nearly ten pounds since the day of the great victory.

‘Your good cooking, Mrs. Spafford——’

Mrs. Spafford smiled scornfully.

‘Did my good cookin’ help her any afore she whacked them boys ? Not much. No, sir, her scholars hev put the flesh on to her pore bones ; and I give them the credit. They air tryin’ to pay for what their schoolmarm’s put into their heads and hearts.’

‘Miss Buchanan has taught *us* a thing or two,’ said I.

‘Yes,’ Mrs. Spafford replied solemnly, ‘she hev.’

A GLIMPSE OF THE EXILED STEWARTS.

I do not know how to begin this paper, except by the commonplace that there never was a royal family so attractive as the Stewarts. If the interest which belongs to Mary, Queen of Scots, and to Charles I., skips a generation in James I. and VI.—and I am scarcely sure that it does when I remember ‘The Fortunes of Nigel’ and the Gowrie mystery—if the interest of Charles II. and of James II. and VII. is peculiar rather than general, the attractiveness of the last three princes shows no sign of diminution. And certainly it will not diminish so long as Mr. Andrew Lang keeps us among the companions of Pickle and Prince Charlie. It is most of all an interest of romance; and when I say that I still remember the ringing tones in which Mr. Ruskin, at Oxford more than twenty years ago, told us, ‘I would have you remember that when I use the word “romantic,” I use it always in a good sense.’ With all the errors and failures of the unhappy line, the romantic interest of the Stewarts is still that which belongs to devotion and self-sacrifice and chivalry and gallant courage.

A wonderful Star broke forth,
New-born, in the skies of the North,
To shine on an Old Year's Night,
And a bud on the dear White Rose
Flowered, in the season of snows,
To bloom for an hour's delight.
Lost is the Star from the night,
And the Rose of an hour's delight
Went—where the roses go;
But the fragrance and light from afar,
Born of the Rose and the Star,
Live through the years and the snow.

When he has quoted these romantic lines, Mr. Lang must add, ‘The eighteenth century, in its moments of self-consciousness, wrote itself down unromantic.’

The glimpse which I can now give, from an old letter, belongs to the least romantic part, perhaps, of the life of the exiled Stewarts. It belongs to the time when James, the Old Chevalier, was living in Rome, when Charles Edward had finished his tour through the Italian cities, and was idling, in weariness of ‘the moth-eaten

hangings and outworn furniture of the Palace of the Apostles, in Rome,' and in dislike of 'a city of priests and of curious English tourists.' In February 1741 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu saw Charles Edward and Henry Benedict at a public ball 'in masque.' It is from the letter of another English tourist that I am allowed, by the kindness of the possessor, to quote a description of the young Stewart princes at a ball in the house of one of the Roman nobility. The writer was Samuel Crisp, the 'Daddy Crisp' of Fanny Burney and her sisters. Mr. Crisp wrote his letter to 'The Reverend Mr. Shute, at Broadwell, near Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire,' from Rome on February 15 (New Style), 1739. He was then thirty-two, and it was fifteen years before the production of his tragedy at Drury Lane. He was on a tour in Italy, and an earlier letter had given an interesting description of Pompeii. At Rome he had been at many entertainments and balls, of which the most notable was at Prince Colonna's, given for the reception of the King of Poland's eldest son. His meeting the Stewart 'pretenders' was an incident which he knew would interest his English correspondents greatly, even if they were not among those who looked for their return. It was a little later in the same year that Walpole himself sent a verbal message, by Carte the historian, professing his attachment to James III. and VIII.

Thus Mr. Crisp's letter :

Last day of the Carnival was the Marchese Bolognetti's Ball, which I will give you a small History of, and so conclude this voluminous letter. The Apartments were not so grand nor the Ball room so magnificent as at Prince Colonna's, but still very fine; but 'tis on account of the Chevalier's sons, who were out of masque, that I give you this further trouble. In order to avoid all Dispute about Precedence, as I told you before, they were both in Masquerade Habits of two young Shepherds, very rich, white silk hats with Diamond Loops and Buttons. Bankes of White Ribbands at their knees, and shoes, their faces unmasked, notwithstanding which they were to be considered only as masques, not as Princes, and accordingly everybody called them Signor Maschera; this was to avoid all Dispute with the Prince of Poland. I think I may say with truth they are two as fine youths as ever I saw; particularly the youngest, who has more Beauty and Dignity in him than even one can form to one's self in Idea; he danced miraculously, as they say he does all his exercises; singing, as I am told, most sweetly, and accompanies himself, and is, in short, the admiration of Everybody; these Accomplishments must come to him by the Mother, for I take the Father to be a Poor, Mean, Cowardly Bigot, and nothing more. Well, these two young Sparks sat on one side of the room, and the Prince of Poland on the other; they had never yet spoke to one another, but the Marchioness Bolognetti (who is mighty fond of the Pretender and his family) was resolved to bring them Acquainted this time, and the sight of the particulars of all this, which I had very fully, pleas'd me very much. The eldest, whom they give here the title of Principe di

Gallia, began the Ball with the prettiest Woman I ever saw, call'd the Bonaventura (I desire you'd toast her for my sake now and then, for she is quite beyond compare the Queen of all Beauty), and after him the younger. In about an hour, in came the Chevalier himself, in a purple and silver domino and masqued; everybody made a great bustle to make room for him when he came in, and after he had gone up to the Marchioness, and some other Ladies to make his compliments, he came down to the end of the Room, where all the English Gentlemen were together, most of them unmasked, and stood among them. I believe he did it on purpose; but nobody took any manner of notice of him, though he talked English for half an hour together to one of his attendants; I was the very next to him, and he heard the English Gentlemen talking together all round him; after some time the Master of the Ceremonies of the Ball came, and asked him by the name of Sire if his Majesty had a mind to see the young Princes dance; to which he answered he should be very glad of it, and accordingly the eldest began, and while he was dancing I was got somehow or other within yards of the Prince of Poland without knowing what was going to be done; but when his minuet was ended the Marchioness Bolognetti, who sat next the Prince of Poland, called to Signor Maschera to come and sit by her; which accordingly he did, and in sitting down made a bow to the Prince of Poland, who returned it and spoke to him; so there was a conversation began between them, across the Marchioness Bolognetti, who, seeing her scheme take effect, got up and made them sit close together; soon afterwards the second son, il Duca di York, as they stile him, had done his minuet, upon which immediately the Lady that sat next the Prince of Poland on the other side immediately got up and made room for him in her place, on which the whole room fell a clapping and cried Bravo! Bravo! I never saw anything so genteel as this young one's paying his court to the electorall Prince; his looks, his gesture, all was the finest and most expressive that can be imagin'd, and I was near enough to hear now and then a Sentence; they call'd cousins; after some short space they both got up to begin English Country Dances, which they have taught all the Roman Ladies, who are much pleas'd with the fashion. I was not a little surprised to hear my old friends Butter'd Peas and Willy Wilkie struck up in a Roman Palace; but here I must end for want of room, else I could tell you a good deal more, though I fancy you will think this is enough.

A few notes may be added to this interesting picture. The Prince of Poland was, of course, the son of Augustus II., whose succession had been assured by the long war and the complicated political intrigues which began in 1733. Dead enough that history would seem to be, and yet it is curious, and one of the things that book collectors and men of letters in time to come will note, that the Crown Prince of Siam actually wrote and published an essay about it recently, and that in English. Prince of Poland they called him politely, but he was never anything but Saxon. Friedrich Christian Leopold was born on August 23, 1722, so he was now not yet seventeen. Eight years later he married his cousin, Marie Antoinette, the second daughter of Charles VII., the Bavarian Emperor; an 'extremely clever, graceful, and lively' girl, Carlyle calls her, who was in later years the very practical correspondent

of the great Frederick. Friedrich Christian turned out an insignificant creature enough, and passed more than forty years of aimless existence before he became Elector. October 5, 1763, saw him on the throne, and there he stayed but two months, dying without having accomplished anything, and leaving behind him a son who became the first King of Saxony. What a contrast were the tame insipidities of this Saxon prince, whose father held the Polish crown till his death, but who himself never succeeded in winning that perilous honour, to the intrepid lad who was within six years to make Europe ring with the exploits of his romantic quest!

As to the place, and the people who gave the entertainment, both have disappeared. I believe there is no Bolognetti among the Roman aristocracy to-day, but there is a Bolognetti Palace opposite the Gesu. The original and great Bolognetti Palace was in the Piazza di Venezia, at the top of the Corso. It was recently pulled down to give a view of the national monument to Victor Emmanuel. It had been bought early in the nineteenth century—some time in the twenties, I think—by the great Torlonia. It was there that he gave his historical and famous balls, and, indeed, he seems to have bought this house simply for that purpose. It was said that everyone who had a credit at his bank of over 500 scudi was asked; it was thus, we shall remember, that Becky Sharp was invited, and went, leaning on the arm of Major Loder, to have her last sight of the Marquis of Steyne, in his collar and orders, his blue ribbon and garter, his red whiskers dyed purple, and the red scar on his forehead. The hackneyed stories of Polonia, as Thackeray calls him, will not bear telling again, but the description of his house is worth quoting by the side of Mr. Crisp's account of the ball which was given there a century before:

All the great company in Rome thronged to his saloons—princes, dukes, ambassadors, artists, fiddlers, monsignori, young bears with their leaders—every rank and condition of man. His halls blazed with light and magnificence; were resplendent with gilt frames (containing pictures), and dubious antiques, and the enormous gilt crown and arms of the princely owner, a gold mushroom on a crimson field (the colour of the pocket-handkerchiefs which he sold), and the silver fountain of the Pompili family shone all over the roofs, doors, and panels of the house, and over the grand velvet baldaquins prepared to receive Popes and Emperors.

Mrs. Elliot, the 'Idle Woman in Sicily,' gives a not unpleasant picture of the house in her 'Roman Gossip,' and of its owners, and tells that it was there that Alessandro, son of the first millionaire, died as he came in from his drive.

W. H. HUTTON.

SOME CAUSES OF THE JAPANESE VICTORIES.

WE of this generation shall probably never learn the authentic details of the gigantic struggle now proceeding in Manchuria ; and until they are known many developments and tendencies of vast significance to the soldier and the statesman must remain undiscovered. A technical discussion on the merits of the rival artilleries, for instance, is at present hardly possible ; and the management of the Japanese or Russian infantry cannot well be discussed until we have an outline of the preliminary dispositions of both sides and of the conformation of the debated ground. The explanation of the apparent failure of the Russian cavalry, the causes of the extraordinary prolongation of the battles, and the principles which have governed the employment of the reserves, together with other kindred problems, must in the main be left to the historian. And while the bare facts relating to matters such as these are still to seek, generalisation on larger questions may well appear hazardous. Yet the repetition of certain features throughout the campaign provides a groundwork from which some deductions, however tentative, may perhaps be drawn ; and two or three of these we propose to discuss in the present paper.

The first and most obvious of the factors which have contributed to the Japanese successes is, of course, the factor of numbers. It is perhaps well, in view of the lessons that some writers in this country were inclined to draw from the experiences of South Africa, that the events in Manchuria have once more reasserted the vital importance of numerical superiority ; and have shown how, in spite of the fundamental differences existing between the contending armies, this factor has remained throughout a determining condition of victory. The fact that in South Africa some 100,000 men and boys contrived to hold out for nearly three years against the efforts of an army of a quarter of a million has been adduced in England, if nowhere else, as a proof that the days of vast hosts were over, and that in the future small armies of superior quality—how small and how superior is not stated—will decide the fate of battles. Even saner thinkers, forgetful of what we ourselves had done in vast and thinly populated countries by means of light

railways, have inclined to the belief that, except on the continent of Europe, the lack of facilities for transport and supply would of itself render the maintenance and movement of large armies impossible, forgetting that the most valuable portions of Asia, although imperfectly railed and roaded, support as large populations as the wealthiest regions of the West.

As has frequently happened in the case of material obstacles outside the influence of the enemy, administrative vigour has once more upset the calculations of experts accustomed to work under conditions of lower tension. The Trans-Siberian Railway, according to Russian official statements, has forwarded to the front no fewer than 750,000 men in the first year of the war; and the Japanese, in spite of the obstacles presented by the climatic and topographical conditions of Manchuria, have managed to place 400,000 men in the fighting-line at a distance of several hundred miles from their sea bases. The value of these vast numbers on the field of combat has been equally apparent. In Manchuria, if anywhere, the conditions might seem well calculated to illustrate the theory of 'the few and fit.' The Japanese soldier appears to possess all those qualities which students of the South African war teach us to regard as the essential virtues of the modern warrior. Intelligent, light, wiry, active, a small feeder, remarkably enduring, gifted with a contempt for death and a love of hand-to-hand fighting which European troops can only envy, and led by officers who possess, in addition to his own qualities, a high degree of military training, it might have been expected that he would have proved equal to twice as many of his reputedly stupid, cumbrous, and ill-led opponents. The results of the different engagements do not warrant such a conclusion. That the Jap is the better man of the two cannot, indeed, be doubted; it would otherwise be difficult to account for a record of victory which, under all circumstances and in spite of the mistakes that the leaders, being mortal, must frequently have committed, has still remained undimmed by any substantial reverse. But it is pretty clear that, in spite of adverse circumstances, the grand qualities of the Russian soldier have more nearly counterbalanced those of his indomitable and fiery opponent than might have been supposed; and the unbroken progress of the Japanese is no doubt largely attributable to the fact that from first to last their generals have striven their hardest to imitate Napoleon and to secure to themselves a numerical superiority on every field of battle. Thus, at the Yalu Kuroki brought some three divisions

to bear upon one ; at the Kinchau isthmus the Japanese probably had 50,000 men upon the ground against less than half that number of Russians ; at Telissu they employed more than three divisions against Stackelberg's two ; and they probably outnumbered in the same proportion Zorubaieff at Tashihchiao, and Keller in front of Fengwhangcheng. At Liau-yang, for the first time, the numbers were practically equal ; and the difference was obvious at once. For on the last day of the fight all the Japanese reserves were thrown in ; and the support afforded by the town and its defences to his southern front, together with his central position astride of the Taitse, almost enabled Kuropatkin to turn defeat into victory. On the Shaho the strength of the two sides is uncertain. Probably in this instance the Japanese were slightly in the minority ; but the attack on their right proved a failure, and the Russian right and centre, this time unprotected by works of a quality similar to those at Liau-yang, were crushed by the great counter-attack before Kuropatkin could recover from his abortive thrust at Kuroki. Yet the general result was not a decisive Japanese success ; nor was such a victory gained until Oyama, having secured a numerical superiority of eight as against six or seven, and having fortified the central sections of his line so as to enable them to be held by a small force, massed four out of his five armies against the Russian flanks, and at a cost of over 50,000 men shattered his opponent's power of resistance and drove him in headlong retreat to the northward.

It is impossible, we think, to find in history troops better than the Japanese, more fierce and obstinate in attack, more grimly tenacious in defence, more simple in their requirements, more unflinchingly patient under hardships, more unconquerable in the face of obstacles. It may be that the French under Napoleon were better marchers ; though even on this score the performances of the Japanese during the movement to the west of Mukden warrant considerable scepticism as to the accuracy of depreciatory criticism on this score. But, so far as our present information extends, no infantry, from the time of Cæsar to the present day, has ever shown so complete a disregard for all the dangers and difficulties of war, or has carried more serenely to its logical conclusion the theory that annihilation is better than defeat. Yet even these amazing soldiers have not been able to dispense with the advantage of numerical superiority ! How, then, can any State whose manhood is nurtured under ideals of life and conduct far different from those which animate

the Japanese safely forgo the resource of numbers? That small bodies of men well handled have produced, and will continue to produce, great local effect on a field of battle may be freely admitted; but that any soldier or statesman, cognisant of the infinite chances of war and of the varied play of national character, would willingly stake his country's existence on the hypothesis that her soldiers will on all occasions prove themselves superior to those of a well-armed and well-disciplined enemy appears to us, in face of the experiences of the present campaign, inconceivable.

If the first great factor of the Japanese victories, in spite of the astonishing fighting power of their troops, has been numerical superiority, the second has been the tenacious grasp of the tactical and strategical initiative, which has enabled them to use that superiority to the best advantage. We need not recapitulate in detail the earlier history of the campaign up to the first grand collision at Liau-yang: it is only necessary to remark that on every important occasion up to the month of October last—we do not include Keller's abortive attack on Kuroki at the Motienling, which was at best that worst of all forms of tactics, a reconnaissance in force, and was marked by the half-hearted execution and the speedy punishment which are the usual features of that kind of operation—the Japanese dictated the law to their adversary. The lamentable position in which the Russian Government placed Kuropatkin in ordering him to march to the relief of Port Arthur is best realised by observing that Stackelberg, who was entrusted with the mission, found himself obliged to fight at Telissu on the defensive; and that an operation which ought to have been a sudden irruption into the midst of the Japanese armies moving up from the coast, was met by the opponents in superior force, and welcomed as affording a convenient opportunity of destroying an isolated body of the enemy. Only at the Shaho, and later at Sandepu, did the Japanese stand on the defensive; and on the latter occasion it was perhaps fortunate for them that Kuropatkin refused to further Gripenberg's initial success by supporting him with the bulk of the army. Here, for a moment at any rate, the Japanese seem to have been caught napping. An offensive-defensive battle, *if the enemy's strength and intentions are correctly judged*, has, in view of the great obstacles which the assailants have in the first instance to meet and the terrible losses and exhaustion which the surmounting of them costs, unquestionable advantages; but, as Kuropatkin found at Liau-yang and

Mukden, this ascertaining of the enemy's dispositions is a very difficult matter, especially when the depth and length of the battle front are so great, and an error of judgment in place or time becomes disastrous to the defender. Thus, at the very moment when, at Königgrätz, Benedek was about to order a great counter-attack upon the first Prussian army, a volley that killed and wounded several of his staff told him that the second army was already on his flank. Thus, at Mukden, Kuropatkin was engaged in a furious attack upon Oku when the news of Nogi's advance to the west and north of the town put an end to all thoughts of the offensive, and obliged him to hurry his reserves from one end to the other of that vast line of battle in order to meet the force that was threatening his rear. The only instance in Manchuria of a counter-attack on a scale sufficient to justify the preliminary adoption of the defensive was that of the Japanese at the battle of the Shaho. At present we know nothing of the details of what M. Recouly, the correspondent for the 'Temps' with the Russian headquarters, justly calls '*la contre-attaque, énergique, foudroyante,*' carried out by the armies of Nodzu and Oku; but perhaps, when the history of this mighty struggle is finally written, that magnificent stroke of generalship will be accorded the proudest place in the roll of victory. In the annals of modern war we cannot recall an instance of a counter-attack so well timed, so resolute, and on so grand a scale. It may be remarked in passing, as a proof of the skill with which the Japanese had chosen their defensive position before the battle of the Shaho, that Kuropatkin, who, to judge from the account lately published in the 'Times' of the battle of Mukden, would have preferred to fight his offensive battle on the comparatively flat country on and west of the railway, seems to have regarded the adoption of this plan as too risky so long as Kuroki threatened his left flank along the mountain road running from Penhsihu to Mukden. He appears to have felt himself compelled to drive that dangerous antagonist across the Taitse before he could deal with the Japanese left and centre, and consequently to engage the pick of his army in the very country which he knew to be favourable to his opponent. Probably, too, it was this same cramping fear for his left that prevented him from reinforcing Gripenberg when, four months later, that general drove in the Japanese left upon Sandepu. This dread of '*le mouvement tournant de Kuroki, ce fameux mouvement dont on a tant parlé,*' to quote M. Recouly, was perhaps the most important strategic factor in the campaign.

The momentary loss of the initiative had proved less serious to the Japanese than might have been expected; and for this, apart from the question of their superior generalship, they had probably to thank the excellence of their Intelligence Department. Their opponents were in far different case. The frightful handicap of a defensive attitude unenlightened by full and accurate information was fatal to the Russian command after the retirement from the disastrous offensive of October. Kuropatkin could fortify positions behind the Shaho, could reorganise his troops and collect reinforcements, but he could not tear aside the impenetrable veil of secrecy with which the Japanese had again managed to shroud their plans. Port Arthur fell, and the direction in which Nogi's 100,000 men would be employed became a question which it was essential to answer correctly. Yet neither Mistchenko's cavalry raid upon Niuchwang and Haicheng at the beginning of January, nor Gripenberg's attack on the Japanese left between the Liao and the Hun at the end of that month—an essentially half-hearted movement, as we have already said—threw any positive light on the situation; and the non-appearance of Nogi's army during those operations could only prompt the conclusion that it was being moved up to reinforce Kuroki in the mountains on the eastern flank. The news that Kawamura's army, part of which, in the phrase of the 'Times' correspondent, 'disappeared from Japan at some time towards the close of January,' was in some region south-east of Mukden strengthened Kuropatkin's conviction that his enemy's gods were gods of the hills, and that the next attack would be made, as at Liao-yang, against his left flank, through the mountains by way of Penhsihu and Chinghocheng. Hence the extension of his left to the south and south-east of Fushun; hence the massing of troops about Machuntun and Tita, and the despatch of his trusted lieutenant, Linievitch, to the same quarter. The falseness of the conception was not demonstrated until on March 7, after fighting had been in progress for over a fortnight, the report arrived of the advance of large hostile forces to the north-west of Mukden. It would be most unreasonable, in the present state of our information, to lay the entire blame of this culminating miscalculation on Kuropatkin's shoulders. The obtaining of good information, always an uncertain business, had become a matter of quite extraordinary difficulty. For the collection of intelligence he had to rely on his cavalry, on his spies, and on information in the shape of newspapers and telegrams. The part played by the

Russian cavalry is one of the enigmas of the war. We have hardly any knowledge of the work of Mistchenko's and Rennenkampf's Cossacks during the long pause which preceded the battle. It may have been thoroughly ill-done. The Cossacks have enjoyed a reputation in the past which, so far as scientific cavalry work is concerned, is probably quite undeserved. Even in the time of Napoleon there was more than one opinion as to their efficiency; and although they have often given signal proof of their courage and hardihood in the course of the present campaign, there is as yet nothing to show that their strategic value is any greater now than it has been in the past. But, in any case, their task during the months preceding the battle of Mukden was one of enormous magnitude. Even supposing the popular estimate of the Japanese cavalry to be correct, the watching of the front and flanks of a line 100 miles long, part of it stretching over country quite unsuited to the action of cavalry, was in itself a difficult business. But in order that Kuropatkin should discover what it was essential for him to know it was necessary to find out what was passing on the enemy's communications; and this implied an immense addition to the fatigues and dangers of his available horsemen. To employ small bodies of cavalry on these distant expeditions is to risk their useless destruction; while the use of large bodies entails a serious drain upon the strength of the arm, and is not in itself a sure guarantee of success. It would be interesting to know what was really happening in the Japanese rear when Mistchenko rode southward, why he failed to learn more, and in what condition his force finally returned to the Russian lines. Kuropatkin, like every general who employs cavalry on such lengthy excursions, has been accused of wasting his horseflesh. How he was to make the best use of it without employing it pretty freely is not clear; but it is possible that Prince Kraft was right in thinking that these raids, which depend for their success on rapidity, involve a degree of wastage and hazard disproportionate to their value. Moreover, as they cannot often be repeated, the information they bring is fragmentary and misleading. It was no use Mistchenko reporting that Nogi was not west of the railway in January. The important thing was to know where he was in the last days of February. Whether in the interval other reconnaissances were pushed towards Haicheng we do not know, but the fact is plain that by the end of February the advance of Kawamura and Kuroki, and the comparative immobility of Oku, had convinced Kuropatkin, who

reserved Mistchenko's ninety-six sotnias at his own disposal during the battle, that his reading of the Japanese plans was correct and that nothing was to be feared west of Mukden.

In the complete failure of his chief means of information—for as such the Germans in 1870 regarded their cavalry; and a moment's thought will show that this must be the case during the short period of strategic tension which precedes the collision of battle—the Russian general was particularly unfortunate, for the circumstances rendered all other sources of intelligence peculiarly unsatisfactory. Manchuria was a country without a Press, and with few ways of communication with the echoing world beyond. Those ways were hermetically sealed by the Japanese; and all telegrams from correspondents were stopped. The military spy was no better off. The army of Japan, like her fleet, works as though under an oath of silence. The headquarters are not prodigal of information; and owing to the varying numbers and almost unvarying similarity in uniform of the different divisions and brigades, the composition of the *ordre de bataille*, the basis of all accurate calculation, must have remained in great part unknown to the Russian Intelligence Department. The resources of local hearsay and rumour were practically closed to it by the disaffection of the Chinese. It is a remarkable fact that the section of country through which Nogi made his secret advance was traversed by the only route left open to civilian traffic with the Manchu capital. To crown Kuropatkin's embarrassment, his maps were grossly defective. 'Anxious and trembling for the birth of fate,' he had to sit still and hope that good fortune would supply the place of knowledge. The pathetically naïve telegram sent by one of the correspondents after the battle, to the effect that the defeat was due to ignorance of the numbers and tactics of the Japanese, is a commentary which requires no elaboration.

What, under these circumstances, was the Russian general to do? It seems to us that the only means of neutralising the disadvantages under which he laboured was a whole-hearted re-assumption of the offensive. Only thus could he hope to force his enemy's hand and to gain time for the arrival of reinforcements and for the arrangement, if necessary, of new defensive measures based on the fresh information. The feverish tenacity with which, under the strain of great uncertainty, Napoleon and Moltke clung to the initiative shows that even the frightful risks entailed by such a course were accounted less by those mighty

captains than the inevitable ruin involved in a merely passive defence. Why, then, did not Kuropatkin take his fate in both hands and why, instead of awaiting battle in a position which, although strong, was not as strong as that of Tieling, did he not advance with 300,000 men and attack Oyama in his winter quarters? The numbers were not unequal, and the sudden concentration of great masses against the weakest point of the long Japanese line, the left flank, might inflict a degree of damage which reinforcements hurrying up from the right might arrive too late to repair. The tactical results of the fight at Hei-kau-tai were not so unfavourable as to discourage the employment of the bulk of the Russian army on the same ground; indeed, if the 'Times' correspondent is right, Kuropatkin considered the wide, even plains west of the railway so unfavourable to the development of the fighting characteristics of the enemy as of itself to preclude any voluntary Japanese action in that part of the theatre of operations. The reason for his inaction could scarcely have been the cold, for, in spite of the hardships it inflicted, in certain important ways, such as the passage of the rivers, it facilitated movement, and had proved no bar to desperate fighting at Sandepu. Again, did he reckon on delay to give him superiority in numbers? Or, as seems to us the most probable explanation, had he come to the painful conclusion that the tactical inferiority of his army rendered offensive operations hopeless unless the Japanese could be first weakened by frequent and bloody repulses in front of his entrenchments? We must examine this last alternative somewhat closely, for in the relative fighting power of opposing armies—we include in this phrase the spirit that inspires the higher leaders as well as the methods and principles that pervade the lower ranks—lies the best, though not the only, guarantee of continued success. Numbers and initiative are both, as we have shown, factors of permanent and essential importance; indeed, it is the extraordinarily complicated nature of the tactical equation itself which obliges the prudent general to assure to himself, by retaining the initiative, the carrying out of his own plan—not the enemy's;—and by the concentration of the largest possible force to provide a margin for unforeseen contingencies. These factors are two of the most important 'makeshifts' upon which the strategist has to depend; and in many cases their possession can be assured to him beforehand. But the elements of the tactical equation are of a far subtler kind, and an answer can only be obtained by the method

of battle. Its influence on any given series of operations belongs to the class of those *Imponderabilien* the omission of which from strategical text-books has rendered their teaching worthless, and of which the correct estimation is perhaps the highest proof of military genius in a commander. Faulty judgment in this matter led to the expulsion of Austria from Germany and nearly cost us South Africa. It was the tactical superiority of their troops which lay at the root of Frederick's and Napoleon's generalship, and supplied Wellington with 'the luck which never failed him from Vimiero to Waterloo.' It was primarily a tactical, not a strategical, error which rendered possible Nogi's unremarked advance on Kuropatkin's flank and rear at Mukden. In its extreme forms, tactical superiority renders possible such miracles as Arbela and Plassey. But in struggles between warlike races equally armed its action is necessarily blurred by the admixture of those other factors we have mentioned; indeed, it supplies the inward strength which makes them realities. What influence, then, has this great factor exercised over the destinies of the campaign in Manchuria?

It is a curious fact, though one easy to parallel, that the dicta of the Russian text-books are greatly at variance with the action of Russian troops on the field. One of the first principles on which the Russian soldier appears to be educated is that his true *rôle*, the one in which his natural characteristics are most happily developed, is an uncompromising offensive, culminating in shock tactics of the most absolute kind. If this is intended to be something more than a pious expression of a general principle, we can only infer that, with a very few exceptions, Russian generals from the time of Frederick the Great downwards have consistently ignored the strongest weapon in their hands. Exclusive of the wars against the Turks, whose mobility and fighting power were greatly diminished by lack of food, equipment, and training, and the campaigns of Souvaroff, the great majority of battles delivered against equally armed opponents have been fought on more or less strictly defensive lines. From Zorndorf onwards the Russian armies have been notorious for their cumbrousness and general lack of offensive power, famous for their unshakable stubbornness in defence, and for the slaughter which, even when beaten, they have managed to inflict on their assailants. The best type of Russian battle is represented by Kunersdorf, Eylau, and Liauyang; the worst by Inkerman, Plevna, and the Shaho. Their tactics have generally borne a strong resemblance to those which

the inferior manœuvring power of his army obliged Wellington to employ at Waterloo, although they have rarely culminated in an advance so victorious as that which ended the battle. In all their encounters, heavy columns of infantry and great masses of artillery have borne the brunt of the fighting. Their cavalry, as is generally the case with an army which fights on the defensive, has never achieved anything worthy of its numbers. Nor has this tendency to act on the defensive been necessarily due to want of numbers or to the exigencies of the strategic situation. Time after time, whether in front of Prussians, French, English, or Japanese, Russian generals have deliberately chosen to be pounded in selected positions; and such counter-strokes as they have attempted have savoured but little of the spirit that decided Austerlitz or the Second Manasses.

In the present war the old phenomena have reappeared. Once again the Russian soldier has shown a capacity for enduring loss which is certainly not surpassed, if it is equalled, by any nation of Western Europe. Once again he has inflicted terrible punishment. And once again he has, generally speaking, fought better when standing still than when moving forward. 'Il est un merveilleux outil de défense,' says M. Recouly, 'parce qu'il est l'homme de la patience, de la résignation !' His artillery has shown the old stopping power, his infantry the same uncomplaining devotion, his cavalry the same lack of initiative. The Russian army, *mutatis mutandis*, is essentially the same as that which fought at Friedland; and whatever advantages modern weapons may have conferred on the defensive seem counterbalanced by the presence of a foe more terrible than the veterans of the Grand Army. We shall not refer at length to the moral qualities of the opposing soldiery. Despite the splendid material of which the Russian army is composed, there is no doubt as to which race has proved itself the doughtiest fighter. The Russian has nothing to oppose to the elemental forces which inspire his opponent. There is not a grain of truth in the once widely-spread idea, that German teaching inspired the reckless frontal assaults which have played so large a part in Japanese tactics. The offensive strength of the soldiers of the Mikado is to be attributed not to the adoption of any formal theory of combat, but to the temper of a race extraordinarily brave and enduring, which has passed suddenly from the Middle Ages into modern life without submitting to the influences which have tamed the barbarian of the West or surrendering

one jot or tittle of a creed of patriotism such as Western barbarism never knew. All this is certain, and it would be difficult to over-rate its importance. But another factor has contributed to the establishment of the tactical superiority of the Japanese armies, without which all 'the struggles of fanaticism and despair' would have merely resulted in appalling waste of life; and its potency is brought into clearer light by recollecting that Japan deliberately entered upon the war with a cavalry inferior in numbers, horsemanship, and equipment, and an artillery worse armed and worse horsed. We refer, of course, to the resourcefulness, resolution, and skill which have been shown by the leaders of all ranks.

It is difficult to give detailed instances of this skilful leadership; for the Japanese commanders, from Oyama's personal staff downwards, are more careful to keep their secrets than to advertise their achievements. But certain broad features, in themselves marks of good generalship, recur too often to be explained away by any theory of chance or individual personality. If Clausewitz was right in saying that a commander must be judged by the proportion of his successes to his failures, the Japanese leaders have no need to fear the verdict of history. In spite of occasional checks, their operations have shown throughout an extraordinary grasp of essentials and an unbending disregard of obstacles. Adopting Sir John Fisher's maxim, that luck in war consists in knowing what to leave to chance, their preliminary measures have been marked by a deliberation and thoroughness which have contrasted strangely with the relentless execution which has been the unvarying sequel. Unlike their opponents, they have never struck without being quite sure of what they intended to do; and, so far as the Russians would permit them, they have steadily abstained from all purposeless fighting. Their strategy has frequently been described as cautious; and if the word implies a careful apportionment of means to ends, we do not quarrel with it. But if it is intended to suggest timidity and hesitation, we cannot admit its accuracy. The long pauses in the operations, the slow development of the great battles, and their apparently indecisive results, are inevitable accompaniments of a system of war which works rather by a process of strangulation than by the sharp stroke of the dagger.

So methodical and continuous has been the Japanese progress that we are in danger of crediting their commanders with the infallibility and foreknowledge which the last generation loved to

ascribe to Von Moltke; and that the comparison should appear so natural is rendered more wonderful by the fact that Kodama's task has in many ways been more difficult than that of his Prussian prototype. The delay of six months before a great battle could be risked—a delay due to the natural difficulties that attended the strategic deployment, and to the heavy strain imposed on Oku's army by the opening fights in and to the north of the Liau-tung Peninsula—was highly favourable to Kuropatkin. The tactical conditions also facilitated delaying action. If the present campaign has shown fewer fights of the hurried and ragged character of Wörth or Spicheren, fewer *combats de rencontre* in the old sense of the word, these partial encounters, these *Theilsiege* on which strategists are wont to lay so much stress, have been of a less annihilating character, and, in spite of their unsuccessful results, have proved very useful to the army of the defence. That this has been the case is to be attributed in part to the solidity of the Russian *personnel*, but mainly to the comparative ease with which a force provided with modern arms can withdraw out of reach of a superior enemy. In old days, as the Prince de Ligne was wont to say, the retreat of a beaten army was a miracle; at the present time, even badly beaten troops are generally able to rally in new positions, and, like Antæus, to receive fresh strength from their mother earth. The earlier fights of the campaign, although resulting in heavy moral and material losses to the different Russian corps, enabled Kuropatkin to prepare defensive positions of great strength and to man them with an army which equalled in numbers that of his adversary.

This was in itself no inconsiderable performance, regard being had to the way in which Kuropatkin had been hampered by orders from home and the deplorable position in which he had been left by the failure of Russia's diplomacy. But the supreme test of skill, the *bataille rangée*, was yet to come; and four gigantic actions, which have been decided under every condition of tactics, climate, and *terrain*, have left no doubt as to the ultimate result of the campaign on land.

The great defeats are not simply to be attributed to Kuropatkin's failure as a general. Throughout he seems to have retained the confidence of his army—no slight feat when the environment of intrigue and corruption within which a Russian general has to work is taken into account; and his action at three great crises has been marked by energy, and even by partial success.

In our opinion, the main cause of the Russian reverses—and if we are right it is one that leaves them no hope for the future—lies in their inferior organisation, the absence in any considerable degree of the capacity for combined action on the part of the higher commanders, and, above all, in the fact that their infantry, individually and collectively, are inferior to their opponents in battle. The larger the armies which are employed, the more difficult does clear insight into the dispositions of the enemy become, the greater grows the proportion of events which must be controlled by local commanders, and the more vital the need of intelligent co-operation. But even the possession of these qualities is of itself insufficient to secure victory. It is impossible for any commander to control these vast seas of combat, of which the fluctuations, indefiniteness, and extent present problems of a strategic rather than of a tactical nature, if he remains on the defensive. He will do well to abandon Russian formalism, to throw aside all ideas of a central reserve—which, as at Mukden, may arrive too late and too exhausted for attack or for defence—and by an unshrinking offensive to endeavour to upset his opponent's combinations and force him to conform to his own. The *strategic* defensive has long been condemned by all schools of military thought; it would seem that the *tactical* defensive, as it comes to approximate more and more to the properties of the strategic, is similarly doomed. From the moment when the battle of the Shaho demonstrated the inferiority of the Russian army as an offensive weapon the result of the campaign was certain. The enemy was enabled to select place and time and means, to dispose of his troops from the first to the best possible advantage, and, by means of a marvellous staff management and the loyalty and vigour with which the whole army, from highest to lowest, was inspired, to carry out his plan to the letter. The battle of Mukden was no isolated stroke of genius; it was the logical consequence of exposing an army whose tactical and organic inferiority obliged it to stand still to the blows of an enemy in whose favour tactical and numerical superiority was developed to the full by a skilful use of the initiative.

F. H. E. CUNLIFFE.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF VALOUR.

THE storm that gathered has broken, and war has come to its
 birth,
 The clash of its meeting armies is echoing through the earth,
 And the Nations watch and wonder, and tremble with awestruck
 gaze,
 At the vast Titanic struggle mid the gloom of these latter days.

Now we sit in our fenced city, 'neath the shade of our olive-tree,
 And we reign in a vast dominion, and rule on the open Sea,
 Our throne is set securely, and great is our fair renown,
 Yet we know full well how we won our spurs, and whence we
 brought our crown.

We are mighty among the Nations, and the power we hold is
 great;
 We sit in the Council of many Kings, and the word we speak
 has weight,
 And to-day within our Empire's bounds the sun can never set;
 But we bought it once with blood and tears, and shall our souls
 forget?

We watch you, oh Little Brothers, and our heart is one with your
 heart,
 For well have you seen the issues and good is your chosen part,
 Your flag is the flag of freedom, and that is the flag we know,
 For we fought the selfsame battle once, some fivescore years
 ago.

Those days we have not forgotten, nor seem they far away,
 When our blood was hot within us, as yours is hot to-day,
 When we fought for our wives and children, for the love we bore
 our land,
 For our King and our country's honour, for the strength of our
 own right hand.

We have followed your dauntless armies through the toils of
your great campaign,
We have seen your foes retreating, as long ago in Spain
Soult marshalled his baffled legions, and evermore gave back,
Till he fled through the mountain passes, with the Iron Duke on
his track.

Your ships have gone forth to battle, with your sovereign's
standard flown
By the storm-winds torn and tattered, by the winds of victory
blown,
As you locked Port Arthur's harbour, nor ever loosed the key,
While your armies marched to Mukden, and your navy held the
sea.

In our distant wave-washed kingdom in silence we saw and
heard,
And the spirit that slumbers deathless in our sea-born sons was
stirred,
For the tide of glory rises, and the breezes, near and far,
Still whisper the name of Nelson, and the tale of Trafalgar.

So your sister island greets you ; she is friend of your country's
friend,
And foe to her foe if need be, till your warfare has an end.
Till your children reap the harvest which to-day your heroes sow,
And reaping, rise and bless them for the deeds of long ago,

When your Empire as ours is mighty, on the same foundations
built,
Of your treasure wisely lavished, of your life-blood bravely spilt,
You will look from the shores of safety, to the rocks where the
surges met,
And even as ours will be your pride, for neither will ye forget.

BLANCHE LASCELLES

GASTRONOMIC DIVAGATIONS.

PERHAPS nothing awakens memories like the sense of smell. The fragrance of a crushed orange will transport you to the East, to the lands of the 'Arabian Nights,' to kabobs and narghillys and unstrained Turkish coffee; the smoke of the turf fire from some cottage chimney in the Surrey wolds carries you away to lone cottages in the forests of the North; a passing breath from the 'Ship and Turtle' in Leadenhall Street reminds you of the luxuries of civic feasts; and the odour of fried plaice from the stall in White-chapel suggests banquets at that other 'Ship' of Greenwich, immemorial shrine of the insignificant whitebait, as much of a fetish as the misshapen West African idol. Then memory indulges in Barmecide feasts, the shadows of all that was substantial or piquant, though unhappily with a vanishing company of phantoms, the familiar figures of the past. But away with melancholy, to quote Mr. Weller or his schoolboy. If three men out of four would own up to the truth, they would say there was no more engrossing subject than gastronomy in practice. Few of them are so ascetic as Dean Stanley, who, as his travelling companion in Syria has told us, never cared how he dined, or, indeed, whether he dined at all. More resemble Johnson, or Dr. Redgill of the Cleikum Club—see the inimitable preface to Meg Dods' cookery book—who assiduously minded their stomachs as the most urgent of moral duties.

But a preface to rambling notes on gastronomy is as misplaced as a lengthy grace or the watery soup which swamps digestion and tantalises without stimulating. Earliest recollections take me back to the Scotch *cuisine*, which owes much to the old French alliance, and draws the refinements of its more artistic traditions from Touraine and Gascony. If Froissart's 'rough-footed Scots' were inferior to the southerners in culinary science, at least their land of brown heath and shaggy wood had the most seductive materials for spit or stewpan, and they had appetites sharpened too often by short commons, and digestions invigorated by keen mountain air. Their game, fish, and black-faced mutton had such a flavour as was not to be paralleled in lands otherwise more favoured.

'We twa hae paddled i' the burn,' Burns sweetly sings of his murmuring namesake; and I might echo him with 'We twa have guddled i' the burn.' I recall a schoolboy lark when, with a truant comrade, we gave our families leg-bail, and camped out for a couple of nights in the moorlands. We had made friends with a hill shepherd, and bivouacked on trusses of rushy hay in his bothy. Seldom have I enjoyed such suppers as those in the peat reek, driven back on us by the winds which whistled down the straw-girdled 'lum,' in dimness illuminated by a single tallow candle. Our host contributed oatmeal and 'braxie' mutton—'d——d green,' like the snails Drs. Black and Ferguson rejected after giving the bivalves a brief trial. But the *plat* of the evening was the small brown trout we caught casually in the course of our eccentric peregrinations, either by casting up-stream with a short line and a worm, or by groping and tickling the speckled-bellies under banks and stones. They were sprinkled with oatmeal; they were done slowly with some shreds of bacon, from a bit we had brought along with us, over smouldering peat, and they had the inestimable merit of never satiating. They were not starved like the trout in a hill tarn, and, small as they were, had a game flavour of their own, different as possible from the mud-saturated sybarites of southern waters. It may have been the circumstances under which they were devoured, but it seems to me that even trout from the pellucid chalk streams of Berkshire or Hampshire could not hold a candle to those Ghurka-like little brown fighters.

I have often fished Loch Leven in old days, when there were only two boats on the water. Then pike abounded, and the trout ran heavier than now. We used to pull into Kinross for luncheon, bringing the morning's take with us; and the buxom landlady was a *cordons bleu*. Give me a Loch Leven trout in the red sauce of claret, spice, and butter, said to be the bequest of the monks of Melrose or Aberbrothick, and I ask nothing better. You may introduce the Loch Leven breed elsewhere, yet they are never like the aborigines, either for spirit or savour. But the fish in all the Highland lochs swept by the swift, rushing rivers are superb. We used to make annual parties to Loch Awe, and feast on the catch from the deep pools and swirling backwaters in the rocky Pass of Brander. There was a time when I walked the Highlands with rod and knapsack. Many of the innkeepers knew me well, and anticipated my *menu*. It was always soup, to be left to the landlord's discretion—sure to be good of the sort, for in soups the

Scotch excel—grouse or hill mutton, according to the season, cranberries or other hill preserves, with rich, frothing cream, but, above all, the freshest trout or salmon. They may talk of Severn salmon or salmon from Christchurch, but you seldom get the fish in perfection to the south of the Tweed, and never in London. It has passed by rail, through Billingsgate, to the slab of the fishmonger. It is true that if it does not leap from the river to the kettle—that was the fashion with old Lord Lovat's drop-nets at his castle of Beaufort—it is all the better for keeping a couple of days. But this is the genuine recipe for making the best of a salmon, and we were wont to practise it from a lodge on the Ross-shire Carron, and on Deeside, proverbially famous for 'fish and tree.' You land your six or eight pound grilse shortly before dinner, silver-scaled, fresh-run, and covered with the sea-lice. You crimp him on the bank, plunge him again in the chilly water, and then send him to the lodge by swift messenger. As Mrs. Poyser sensibly remarks, it is a poor thing when the flavour is in the cruets. Sprinkle with parsley, serve simply in the water in which he was boiled, with perhaps a dash of anchovy and some faint suspicion of chili; but that may be matter of opinion. The refreshment rooms at Perth Station had the root of the matter. I never go through that station now without recalling the salmon steaks which awaited the fasting traveller when he got out for breakfast after the long night journey from London, before the days of sleeping-cars. There, now, they give you milk for cream, and the salmon seems to have lost its savour; though the fault may be in oneself, for Tay salmon is still what it was when Sir Patrick Charteris netted his fishings from Kinfauns and Scott eulogised it in 'The Fair Maid.'

The trouts of the Tay are inferior to those of Tweed, Teviot, and Spey, and other clear-rushing rivers, for the Tay flows down from the fertile Carse of Gowrie, and the fish fatten on a somewhat muddy diet, and so there is wide difference in the trout of the lochs. The *Salmo ferox* is never much of a delicacy. He gives splendid sport, but after that you are indifferent to him; yet in deep Loch Ericht he is far superior to the voracious monsters of Loch Awe; and so the fish of the eastern inland waters of Sutherland cannot stand a comparison with those of the west. I had, ungratefully, almost forgotten the seductive sea-trout. At the mouths of most rivers they are on the rise at certain turns of the tide. It is grand fun in a light, bracing sea breeze, pacing the gravelly beach and

casting the white flies, waiting, in sure and certain hope of the swift swirl and the rush. The sea-trout, compact of flakes set on springs of steel, has a subdued richness all his own. I used to fish him from the inn of Ellon at Ythan mouth—the inn where the lettered landlord paid Johnson the delicate compliment, with the exception that touched him, that he was the greatest man in England next to Lord Mansfield. There I fell in with a keener fellow-fisherman, Giles, the famous Aberdeenshire animal painter, who ran a fair second to Landseer. Many an evening we prolonged the late supper of sea-trout split and ‘brandered’ into the small hours. It was Giles who covered the walls of Lord Aberdeen’s hunting-lodge at the Braes of Gight—the family property of Byron’s mother—and decorated the saloons of the *Queen* steamer, much patronised before the rail ran north to Aberdeen, with his chasings of the deer and his spearings of the otter; which reminds me of another notable Scottish artist, ‘Philip of Spain,’ whom I used to foregather with at the ‘Invercauld Arms,’ in Braemar, over grilled steaks of grilse and collops of venison.

These Scottish salmon and trout take one abroad to the Rhine and the Pyrenees, the Palatinate and the Tyrol. Rhine salmon is overrated—those blinded foreigners know no better—though it is the best of Continental fishes, some of the trout and the Mediterranean sardines only excepted. Nothing approaching the sea-borne fish that has just shot the arches of Berwick bridge or faced the fierce rush of flooded Spey or Findhorn, he has been working his way up the sluggish Dutch flats. In Scotland you have your salmon served simply in salt water; at Cologne you fall among the sauces. Dutch salmon and the smooth, rich Dutch sauce go well together, and I always associate the *sauce hollandaise* with the Hôtel de Hollande at Cologne—with a table in a window looking down on the Rhine stream, and the cruets with the red vinegar and yellow oil. Thence one flies on the wing of fancy to Ledoyen’s, in the Champs-Élysées, where a speciality is the salmon with the inimitable *sauce verte*. The ingredients are inscrutable as the Asian mystery. I only know that I but once had it satisfactorily in England, and then the *chef* was an artist retained by a Belgian count. He had been apprenticed to Ledoyen, and kept his secrets.

Continental salmon is seldom up to the mark, but Continental trout are often exquisite. I confess that for myself I prefer them *au naturel*; but there is something to be said for the *vivier*. It is

a pierced box, submerged in the stream, where the finishing touch is put to the captives by a diet of breadcrumbs and chopped liver. There is one point in their favour—that it is but a leap from the box to the kettle. From the little salon in the inn at Eaux Chaudes you literally looked down on your dinner, and the fish were chilled and half crimped by the flow from the snow-covered Pyrenees. Alsace, Upper Lorraine, and the Palatinate are lands of gushing fountains and rushing waters, running in rivulets through the streets of homelike villages, where troops of snowy geese are being nursed for chronic liver complaint and the *pâté de foie gras*. Everywhere the *vivier* is handy to the hostelry; but you have these trout at their best—perhaps it is from sentiment of associations—where they have been transferred from the rapid Neckar to the tanks of the Wolfsbrunnen, near Heidelberg, the fountain where the witch fell a victim to the were wolf. You walked through the woods of a summer evening from the castle; sounds of revelry disturbed the sylvan silence, and you emerged on a festive gathering of students, enveloped in clouds of tobacco smoke, and connoisseurs in the cooking of the trout. Still more romantic should have been the associations at Vacluse, where Petrarch's sonnets were forgotten for the trout, the eels, and the crayfish.

None of the foreign trout surpass in fighting spirit those of the Tyrol and Salzkammergut. Sir Humphry Davy fished the lower reaches and the Lake of Gmünden. I was in the way of putting up at the 'Kaiserin Elizabeth' at Ischl, where the landlord leased several miles of the water. I agree with Sir Humphry that there is no sauce like a light flavouring of mustard and vinegar, which, if the trout be somewhat flavourless or a trifle stale, develops into the piquant *sauce tartare*, an unrivalled accompaniment to second-day sole. But you should never tamper with a sole fresh from the sea. For a month on end I daily breakfasted at Boulogne on a sole sent up straight from the brown-sailed fishing boat, with a simple squeeze of the lemon. That lemon suggests Lake Lemán, the trout of Geneva, and the *sauce genevoise*. Many a day have I trolled for them from Vevay or Ouchy; many a blank day have I lamented, and I think I never once saw them at a *table d'hôte*. There may be few or many, but they are hard to lure; when you do catch one, he is well worth the trouble.

It is a far cry back from Schloss Tyrol or Chillon to Tweedmouth, or the Broomielaw. The Clyde tourist steamer suggests sea-fish, and the herring in especial. I remember the cry of an over-

tasked steward, rushing between caboose and cabin. 'It's no ham and eggs: it's herrings and potatoes they're wantin'.' The passengers on a placid sea were clamorous for soft-roed herrings. If they could not, like Bailie Nicol Jarvie, carry the Sautmarket at their tails, they knew when they were well off. Were I tempted like King John, who died of a surfeit of lampreys, I should be seduced by fresh herrings. I do not know why Loch Fyne asserts a supremacy; the herrings are as good all the way to Cape Wrath, and down through the 'roosts' of the Orkneys to Peterhead and the Tay estuary. I once knocked up a herring picnic to Peterhead in the height of the curing season. It was a bright and busy scene in the harbour, with boats standing in before an easterly breeze, with buxom girls gutting and packing the fish on the wharves, for there had been a miraculous draught of the fishes. I forget what they charged us in the bill. I knew that the herring was a drug in the market, and if we pulled through the Lenten orgy and brought back appetite for a late dinner, it was owing to liberal correctives of Glenlivet.

The Loch Fyne herring, though no impostor, is something of a swaggerer, and so is the Dublin Bay haddock. He is excellent, but little better than his neighbours—than the haddock of the Firth of Forth, for example. In the olden time we had capital fish dinners at Newhaven, modest imitations of those at Greenwich, with none of the glitter, at a fourth of the expense. Pandore oysters cost next to nothing; we used to roast them, and broil them, and scallop them in semi-underground cellars in Edinburgh, and the reckoning, with Edinburgh ale and whisky toddy at discretion, was a bagatelle. *À propos* of haddocks and whiting, I never saw fine fish so gratuitously bedevilled as on the 'strand of mountainous Northumberland.' I passed part of two winters at Alnmouth, picturesque enough and bracing, but dismally dreary with the sea 'haar.' The fishermen used to bring us pailfuls of living fish, and the poor floundering prisoners were so lamentably knocked about that they were flabby and savourless beyond belief. Yet at Alnmouth with the bursting spring there was one gastronomic compensation. I never came across such multitudes of plovers, breeding promiscuously in the rushy sea-meadows; crossing country, you could hardly keep your feet out of the nests, and you gathered up the eggs by handfuls.

Much might be said of the woodcocks of the sea, with trails as luscious as those of the land birds. I paid many a visit to the Isle of Purbeck, where my host, like Lord Byron, had his boat upon

the sea, and the catch came daily to the kitchen before breakfast. That trail of the red mullet is the realisation of a gourmet's desire; the pity is that the flakes suffer somewhat by contrast. Somersetshire is famed for its salmon and lampreys. The Severn salmon may deserve its reputation, but I have as little sympathy with King John in his death as in his life, and never did appreciate the lamprey. Among the many fascinations of romantic Thames, rising within a bowshot of sandy-bottomed Severn, the eel takes a foremost place. When boating through a sultry summer, with headquarters at Halliford, we punted out with the Rosewells for the morning header, and watched with keen personal interest the incidental emptying of their eel baskets. So I used to punt forth from the Wharf Farm, in the picturesque grounds of Hedsor, under the hanging woods of Cliefden, 'the bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love,' when those eel-pots lent a sensuous charm to the background. The monks of Ely and Peterborough, and the Saxons who held the Camp of Refuge, were not to be pitied in their Lenten fasts when they had the eels of the Fens to fall back upon. But without making invidious comparisons, the eel of the Thames is super-excellent. Benevolence, as Thackeray says, is never better bestowed than in tipping a schoolboy and taking him out to dine. It was a sort of charity that blessed the giver with the receiver when I went down to Eton to draw a cousin for the afternoon, take him for an appetising ramble in Windsor Park, and entertain him afterwards at the White Hart. Eels are undeniably rich, but I differ from those who say they are indigestible. Spatchcocked, or stewed in a spiced sauce of red wine, washed down with Bordeaux or Burgundy, in fair health and condition you may indulge reasonably with impunity. When in doubt as to digestion, have them plain-fried—*sauce tartare* is delightful, but insidious—liquidate with champagne, and correct with Cognac. Never mix your liquors, and stick to moderately dry champagne, is the safe rule for the delicate gourmet, and he may add, as a corollary, don't mix your fishes. How much has the innocent whitebait to answer for, only piquant when devilled with cayenne! I know no such ordeal as a prolonged Greenwich banquet, with every species of fish, flesh, and fowl, and appropriate vintages at each remove.

To hark back to Scotland and a survey of the Scotch sideboard. Saddles, sirloins, or rounds are flanking cold game in the season. There are two specialities deserving particular notice. The sucking pig would have gladdened the heart of Charles Lamb, for it is the

Scotch cook who best knows how to dress it, and the essayist of the old South House died in Egyptian darkness. When Dr. Redgill, in the admirable introduction to 'Meg Dods,' stumbled over one of a litter, he nevertheless lighted on his feet, for he met it at table afterwards. Then there is the crab of the Buchan coast in August or September; for the crab, as the Scotch saying is, fills with the corn. Dressed crab is a mistake; the way to appreciate it is to dress it impromptu for yourself, with oil and vinegar, cayenne and ketchup, stirred up through the luscious treasures of the back. Then there is the old-fashioned Scottish dinner, which carries you back for a couple of centuries, and is an archæological *menu*, from the soups to the pancakes which were religiously devoured on Fastern's Eve. The best Scotch dinner I ever enjoyed in the course of country rambles was at Inversnaid of a Sunday, and it lasted nearly as long as the sermon of the forenoon, which is saying a great deal. The tourists were all ravenous at the early *table d'hôte*, and I remember my disgust when I found myself croupier, doomed to dispense the curdy salmon and to carve the goose which confronted the haggis. They were hurrying back for second helpings before I had settled to serious work. But the shrine where the venerable traditions are most jealously and profitably preserved is in very different surroundings from the breezy braes of Loch Lomond. The Fleshmarket in Edinburgh is, or used to be, approached by darksome lanes, and the hostelry looked out on an odoriferous close. It was a more modern edition of Clerihew's, immortalised in 'Guy Mannering,' but there was a snug apartment *au premier*, though somewhat stuffy, for little freshness was to be gained by opening the windows. You begin with cock-a-leekie; the fish remove was 'crappit heads,' to be succeeded by the sheep's head, with the trotters and the haggis; that was followed by steaks, hot and hot—a southern interpolation—winding up with marrow-bones and toasted cheese, to which the Scotch were as much addicted as the Welsh. Many a merry party met in that upper chamber, graced by men who sent in old wine from private cellars. The invariable accompaniment of the haggis, 'Great Chieftain of the pudding race,' was a square bottle of Glenlivet with a faint flavour of the peat reek. There was nothing your English friends appreciated more than that dinner in the dimness of a Hades. Holyrood and the Castle were not in it with it. Once, giving him careful directions for guidance, I asked one of them to order the dinner. All went well till the appearance of the haggis—about the size of

a turkey's egg. A violent tug brought down the bell-rope and brought up the landlord. Grasping the situation, before a word of protest he was profuse in apologies. 'God bless me, sir, if I had known it was you who was entertaining: but they spoke of an Englishman, so I keptit the haggis small, for it was not to be expected that they would make free with the whisky.' On that very day I learned another lesson, which would have been invaluable to a Vitellius or Lucullus. My friends had lunched late and liberally at the New Club, and despaired of doing justice to the promised spread. As it chanced we spent good part of the afternoon in a Turkish bath, and after the rubbing down their fears had been dissipated. If they had been shipwrecked mariners after a forty-eight hours fast, they could hardly have come up to a more creditable performance.

The Scotch excel in soups, but the best are rather savoury messes, suited to a harsh climate and robust appetites, sharpened perhaps by previous fasting. Nothing can be better in its way than hodge-podge, with mutton cutlets floating in a miscellany of vegetables, but it is hardly a suitable prelude to a London dinner. Hare soup is scarcely less solid, though the Ettrick Shepherd's recipe of six to the tureen may be excessive; for though Scottish Calvinists are sturdy Old Testament folk, they abjure the Levitical law of abstaining from the blood. On the other hand, nothing can be lighter or more nutritious than the Friar's chicken, or the plain 'fish and sauce,' rather contemptuously assigned for the use of invalids. In the former are floating fragments of the breast and wings, which you may eat or not as you please; the other is simply a fish soup, made of the freshest and choicest haddocks and whiting. Even with the fisherfolk nothing of them is lost. Tails and trimmings are boiled down for stock, and the heads are 'crappit' with a stuffing of oatmeal and butter, onions and pepper. Cock-a-leekie falls between the two classes, and an invaluable stand-by it is for a wild shooting party remote from butcher and poulterer. The essence is the leek; the backing ought to be beef, but that may be dispensed with when everything gamey goes into the stock-pot. When we stopped some venerable blackcock in his swinging flight, he was invariably consigned to the cock-a-leekie kettle. If you got a capon to cut up, it was well; failing that, a grey hen or hen pheasant. Seventy-five years ago the prunes in cock-a-leekie were pronounced an anachronism, yet sentiment and tradition alike recommend them.

Talking of shooting parties lands one among the game. In the lonely lodge you may be many miles from any market, and can only buy your mutton by the carcass. Nevertheless, with sure bullets and straight powder you need never be badly off; though in early September you may be overdone with grouse, and almost loathe them, as the Israelites 'scunnered' at the quails in the wilderness. In mid-August how delectable the rough-booted young barbarians were, reposing on their backs on buttered toast in the good old mountain fashion. None of the uncongeniality of bread sauce, suited perhaps to their Yorkshire cousins, who forage on the wheat stooks—no breadcrumbs—possibly potato chips, if you chance to grow potatoes in your kailyard. But grouse roasted for dinner, brandered for breakfast, cold for lunch, in pie and in salmi, becomes a weariness at the last; though there are circumstances in which there is a sharp resuscitation of the appetite. I have seldom feasted more luxuriously than when, after long fasting and wandering in an autumnal fog, I have sat down in driving drizzle, in the lee of a gamebag, to devour a young bird that had been scorched on a ramrod. The appetite had been doubly whetted by the difficulties in kindling a fire.

Grouse may become a weariness, but there is always variety. You hear the quack of the mallard, and, creeping along softly, you steal upon him and his mate beyond the bend of the burn; you flush the teal from the reeds round the solitary tarn, and as they lie out among the heather you walk-up the precursors of an early flight of woodcock. Strange how quickly these wanderers get themselves into condition, and the first gorges of the gluttons go to getting up the trail. The breast may be somewhat meagre—a secondary consideration; but it is seldom the trail does not repay attention. Snipe and woodcock are picked up by single birds; but if there is one sight that gladdens the soul of the gourmet on the moors, it is the vision of a scimitar-like swoop of the golden plover, their backs and wings flashing in the sunshine. If in luck you riddle them as they circle round you in the air. You rake them again when they range themselves along some peat bank; then they are gone, but the heather is strewn with the dead, and there is work with the wounded cut out for the retriever. And the trail and thighs of plover that have been fattening on the western sea-lochs are neck and neck with those of the snipe, and run the most exquisite woodcock hard. Nor are the green plover, before they have shifted to the seashore, very far behind the golden.

Save for the grand air and the glorious scenery, ptarmigan are hardly worth the trouble of climbing for. Nor is the actual sport much more exhilarating than that of the drive which is matter of sheer necessity for thinning the innumerable mountain hares that puzzle the dogs and aggravate the sportsmen. The best that can be said of the hares is that they come in convenient for soup. But if you chance to have stretches of copse wood on the low ground, the roes can be turned to excellent account. The Baron of Bradwardine was wrong for once when he asserted that the roe was never in pride of grease, for in the autumn they are the fatter and the finer, and much depends on the summer feed. The Highland roe is surpassed by those of the Continent, who doze through the day in sheltered woods and roam out at morn and eve among the cattle in verdant meadows. There is no better dish in a German hotel than the small saddle or *Rehrücke*, with white, piquant sauce, if you can persuade the cook to keep it long enough. But when I used to put up at a lodge in a famous deer-forest in Ross-shire for salmon-fishing, before the harts or yeld hinds had come into season, there was no joint we appreciated more than a shoulder of roe stewed with carrots, and served with a claret sauce. The flavour of game always depends on the diet, and pheasants from the hills are infinitely preferable to birds turned out of coops in the home coverts. As Hayward remarks in his 'Art of Dining,' the partridges from the grasslands of the Shires are not to be compared with their cousins from the fertile wheat counties. So those who are only acquainted with park-fed venison have never realised the possibilities of the fallow deer. I have shot them and eaten them when they had broken bounds and run wild for a generation or two with the roes in the Inverness-shire woods. Then one might say, with Dumas's Swiss landlord who recommended the bear steak of the man-eater: '*Goûtez ça et vous m'en direz nouvelles.*' It would be blasphemy to say anything against the haunch or neck of a prime yeld hind from Athol, Badenoch, or the Black Mount. Yet it is permissible to regret the deficiency of the fat, the distribution of which is the trouble of the epicure carving the fallow haunch. That is corrected by enclosing the wild deer in a southern park; but unfortunately nothing in this world is perfection, and you lose in savour what you gain in grease.

On the Continent the herds of wild swine range the forests among the roe and red deer, and in the south especially the tame pigs are turned loose in the woods to gorge themselves with the

acorns, chestnuts, and beech-mast. Consequently in these favoured lands the pork is always delectable, and the hams, when carefully cured, approach perfection. When I wintered at Sorrento, perforce we chiefly lived upon pork, and the sole complaint was that it palled after a time. The torrid Spanish peninsula is proverbial for poor living, but the charms of the Spanish swine are scarcely to be overrated. Everywhere the shreds of pork are the foundation of the succulent *puchero*. Never on the Continent have I seen a loin or a leg till it had been salted, spiced, and smoked. The choicest Spanish hams are those of Estremadura and Andalusia. Ford says that the pigs of the country round Chiclana have the finishing touch put to them by a snake diet. I know not how that may be, but personally I give the palm to the Portuguese hams; possibly because I have judged them under exceptionally favourable conditions. I have tried them at the table of Senhor Martinez, of the great Oporto house, where the accompaniment was old and unadulterated port. And a Scottish wine merchant in regular relations with Lisbon and Oporto used to make the consignment of a batch of the hams from Entre-Minho-e-Douro or the Algarve the occasion of little dinners, where Leoville or La Rose led on through the olives to the Lafitte and Château Margaux. We hear little now of the hams of Bayonne, and Westphalia would seem to have fallen out of the running with the opening of coalfields and the starting of ironworks; and how is it that the distressful country beats England out of the field, for neither York nor Devon, nor even the Bradenhams, can hold their own with Cork or Limerick?

The connoisseur in mutton has an ample home choice. The mountains and moors of the British Isles for five-year-old mutton against the world. There is little to choose between the black-faced of the Welsh, the Scotch, or the Cumberland hills. As a rule, the smaller the sheep, the sweeter the mutton—bred in the bitter blasts and fattened in the sheltered vales—the breed of sheep John Ridd tucked under either arm when he carried home the survivors of his flocks from the drifts of the memorable and fatal snowstorm. For Dartmoor and Exmoor are not behind the Vale of Llangollen and the sheepwalks of the far North. I do not know that any restaurant in London now makes a speciality of tiny joints of the black-faced, though I could send the reader to a shop in Fleet Street where Exmoor and Dartmoor are always on sale. The innocent French, who know no better, make much of their *pré salé*, from the sheep on their south-eastern salt

marshes. It is good enough when you can get no better, and I have often enjoyed it at the Hôtel de France or the Paris of Bordeaux. Though there it was thrown into the shade by three local delicacies—the *cèpes*, or great, rich, fleshy mushrooms; the *royans*, the delicate sardines of the Gironde; and the *foies de canards sauvages aux olives*, which peremptorily claimed the *chasse* of old Cognac. As for the *gigots* of the Pyrenees, they would have been beyond praise for the hungry pedestrian if they had not been invariably bedevilled with saturation of garlic; of course, a single clove in the knuckle is *de rigueur* in every well-conducted kitchen. At the Trois Frères Provençaux in Paris, and the Café Voisin, they imported Gascon tradition into the Parisian cuisine, and the *poitrine de mouton*, a favourite morning *plat* at the Voisin, was a thing to remember, for the *sauce Béarnaise*. There the garlic, as another condiment in Sydney Smith's metrical recipe for a salad dressing, lurking, scarce suspected, permeated the whole. The mutton of the East much resembles goat, yet it is savoury when stewed with rice in the pilau. Never in my life was I so constrained by civility to stuff as at the festivities at Ismailia, at the opening of the Suez Canal. One day we had breakfasted copiously at the villa of M. de Lesseps; thence we adjourned for late luncheon to the pavilions of the Khedive, where the cutlets, cooked in the open at the desert fires, detestably smoked over half-green wood, were made palatable by libations of the rarest brands of Roederer or Veuve Clicquot. We had coffee and cognac, and fondly fancied we had closed gastronomic accounts for the time, when we were persuaded to get up on camels for a round of the tents of the Bedouins. But not a bit of it. Sheikh after hospitable sheikh we found seated, in waiting, behind the circular table with the great circular pilau dish. It would have been a deadly insult to decline the hospitality, and when the host plunged his hand in the platter and brought up a handful of the mess, it would have been ungracious not to grin and swallow it smilingly. We had gone in for the round of visits, and we went through with it. But mortal nature could not have stood the strain had not the Bedouin pilau been as savoury as the Khedive's cutlets were execrable, and, by the way, there were dates in it, as prunes in the cock-a-leekie; for the Orientals, like the Scots, have a sweet tooth they never lose. And there are other delicacies that both appreciate. When Fergus MacIvor welcomed Waverley to Glennaquoich, the 'hog in harst,' the lamb roasted whole, figured con-

spicuously at the banquet. No Englishman in a sultry climate need wish a more insinuating *pièce de résistance* than the rosy-tinged lamb, stuffed with pistachio nuts, when served at the hospitable table of some wealthy Turk or Greek in Frankish Pera or in Stamboul.

The beef of Old England is as much a national institution as 'Rule Britannia' or right of free speech, and deserves better than to be flippantly brought in in a postscript. Yet even there Old England cannot have it all its own way. Sleek and shapely are the Shorthorns that fatten in the southern meads, but if not actually of Scottish birth, the race has developed by such scientific Scotch breeders as old Amos Cruickshank, the Quaker of Sitlyton, who has honourable mention in the pages of 'The Druid.' The blue-ribboned fat cattle at the Christmas shows come chiefly from Aberdeen or Forfar. Long after the Martinmas steers were slaughtered wholesale, and stored away in pickle for winter consumption, the most aristocratic of our ancestors were far from fastidious. And many a memorable sea fight from behind the old wooden walls was won by our mariners on junk as hard and highly polished as the best solid mahogany. But it is to be feared the digestions of all classes have been weakening. There are still houses in the City, and there is one in Cork Street, which rest their reputation on the steak, but the steak and silver gridiron clubs of Covent Garden are no longer the rallying-centres for select coteries of men illustrious in statecraft, in literature, and in fashion, who drained the tankard and drenched themselves in old crusted port in defiance of the gout and the morning's reflections. The French *filet*, à la *Chateaubriand* or with other refinements of the culinary art, is far more in favour; but though it should come from the undercut, the choicest of the sirloin, on this side of the Channel it is too often a gross imposition. In my opinion, the undercut is better cold than hot, with a self-compounded sauce of mustard, ketchup, shalots, horseradish, and finely sliced carrot. But for myself, and of all things, give me the small spiced round of 'hunter's beef' from the shaggy black Highlander, brought down from the green corries of his native hills to have the finishing touches in Strathearn or Strathtay. Nor is there the haunting sense of evanescent enjoyment, as with the bitter of the grouse back or the trail of the woodcock, for with that round you may cut and come again indefinitely.

ALEXANDER INNES SHAND.

WILD ANIMALS AS PARENTS.

BY GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

DARWIN once said that it gave him a 'cold shudder' to reflect that the eye must be included among the parts of living creatures which have reached their present state by natural selection. Sir Henry Holland was scandalised when the theory was broached to him, but found consolation in the exquisitely contrived bones of the ear: they at any rate, he said, were beyond all reasonable suspicion. It is hard to imagine the eye, that visible master touch in the cosmography of man, evolving through unthinkable ages out of some shapeless pulp into its present form. But the eye, after all, is only a window. It is when the uncompromising natural selectionist says that the mind and spirit which look out through the window have come the same way, that men may shudder with Darwin and Holland. Even setting aside man—'that amphibious piece between a corporeal and spiritual essence, . . . the breath and similitude of God,' as Browne defines him—it is not easy to feel satisfied with the theory that the high and curious intelligence, and often the beautiful affections, of 'the lower animals' have come about solely by the agency of natural selection. Since I began to write this article a book called 'Doubts about Darwinism,' by a 'semi-Darwinian,' has appeared, which touches on the matter. The theory of natural selection, urges the writer, does not account for the way in which the care of animals for their offspring arose. He refers in particular to the precautions taken by two insects, a sexton beetle and one of the sphexes, for the future welfare of their young. The case of the various sphexes is perhaps the most amazing in natural history, but it is by no means the most touching. She digs a long passage, and forms at the end several chambers, in each of which she lays an egg. Then she goes out and captures a caterpillar or a cricket. She does not kill the prey outright—which she could with ease—but paralyses it by stinging it in a carefully selected and non-vital part. In each chamber she places a paralysed insect, which will linger on alive

till the eggs hatch, and the young sphexes find, ready to hand, a supply of fresh meat!

Our own familiar wild rabbit affords a much more affecting instance of a mother's love than any sphex. The sphex sets about her duty of providing for her future young in a highly scientific way, indeed with the ingenuity of a fiend. The doe rabbit has small science, but rare tenderness and, on certain occasions, great bravery. She makes, as a rule, a special burrow for her young. She plucks soft fur from her own body for a large and warm nest. When her young are born, and she has to leave them for a while, she barricades the entrance of the burrow with earth. Such a precaution may not be very exceptional among wild animals. But let us turn to an extraordinary change that takes place in the disposition of the rabbit when she has a nest of helpless young. Ordinarily, she is one of the most timid of wild creatures. The fact is proverbial: 'If you had the pluck of a rabbit' or 'You haven't the pluck of a rabbit' is an English taunt. Hunted by stoat or weasel, the rabbit often becomes helpless through fear, and screams even before the teeth of the foe have gripped her neck. Yet a doe rabbit with young will not only fight if a stoat comes on the scene, not only buffet or kick—and a rabbit's kick or scratch is not a light matter—the villainous intruder, but will succeed in driving him away. I have never had the happiness to witness this delightful incident during my very many wood rambles. But my friend the gamekeeper has seen it more than once, and given me an account of it. Best of all, on one occasion he saw the stoat not only beaten off, but miserably cowed. It screamed with fear or chagrin. The keeper, after watching from his hiding-place the battle, and the defeat of the stoat by the rabbit, shot the former as it fled. There are various instances among wild creatures in England of the fearful waxing brave when their young are threatened, but I know of no case where the tables have been turned so comically and completely as in this of rabbit and stoat.

The stoat, like the doe rabbit, is one of the best of parents. She trains her young to hunt by scent so soon as they can move about with her, and will often tenderly carry them to the happy hunting-grounds over impediments or dangerous places. Stoats, at any rate those that live by rivers, are expert swimmers. But their young do not take to the water quite like amphibians to start with. The mother will carry them, therefore, over a narrow

plank stretched across a stream. She will run nimbly across with one of her children held by the skin of its neck or back, place it on dry land, and then dart back for another. It is a curious and delightful sight to see the little family party waiting by the brook-side whilst the mother takes them over one by one. I have seen young stoats so conveyed which were perfectly nimble and able to look after themselves: when I stole in upon and disturbed them they disappeared as swiftly as the old one would have done.

Bold like the doe rabbit in the defence of their young, both male and female missel thrush fight hard at times against superior strength and cunning. The missel thrush, however, is ordinarily rather spirited. It is shy of man's haunts except at the nesting season (and, later, the yew-berry season), preferring wild and remote spots; but it is not fearful of feathered and other foes. It has been known to beat off a cat. I have seen it hustle with effect magpies that have come too near its home, and worry and insult a rook persistently. In the early spring, the missel thrush often leaves the depths of the wood, and comes to rear its young in the trees around houses. Gilbert White remarked on the great affection shown by this bird for its young, and described a long struggle which a pair made to save their home. A party of magpies, which are the missel thrush's chief foe, came to storm the nest. The missel thrushes fought hard, but in the end the magpies won, and killed and carried off the young birds in the nest.

This, I take it, is how natural selection would make the doe rabbit or the missel thrushes fight for their young. Neither of these creatures in its original form need have the habit of fighting for its young, of making snug nests such as it makes now, of caring for them indeed in the least. But here and there, now and again, spread over a great period of time, what may be described as accidental variations of the remote ancestors of both creatures would occur, tending, however slightly, towards this fighting, this snug nest building. The offspring of such variations would have the best chance of survival in the struggle of life. By heredity, the tendency would be handed on from generation to generation, would become stronger and stronger, until in the end the tendency to care for, to fight for, to build nests for its young would become a fixed habit in doe rabbit and in missel thrush. According to this theory, then, we are not to suppose that the beasts and the birds started with the parental instinct, as we

understand it to-day: what is now affection, deep-seated, came about through the agency of a vast number of small chances. Let those who have watched the ways of wild creatures, seen the divine tenderness which parents, feathered and furred, lavish on their children, hug the theory if they will. Some of us cannot think it. It must be remembered that, though Darwin believed that this instinct had come about in the main through the small and accidental variations out of which his Nature ever selects, he did not affect to describe the steps. 'We know not,' he wrote, in his 'Descent of Man,' 'the steps by which they have been gained, but we may infer that it had been to a large extent through natural selection. So it has been almost certainly with the opposite feeling of hatred between the nearest relations, as with the worker-bees which kill their brother drones, and with the queen bees which kill their daughter queens.' Huxley himself warned Darwin against trusting too implicitly to his theory of development by pure natural selection working through these small variations. But Darwin would not allow nature to take any leap or to be subject to any intervention of Mind.

In the care of their young, birds often show the hope and fear, the joy and grief, which remind us so of human emotion. I have watched nightingales closely for many years, but cannot bring myself to think that grief is ever heard in their songs when their young have come by a sad end or their eggs been pilfered. I believe the song itself always denotes joy, or else rivalry with other nightingales, blackcaps, or other fine singers in the neighbourhood. But it is certain that they have, apart from their song, an intense note of anxiety or menace, or sometimes of warning to their young to beware of intruders. It is not perhaps so much what the nightingale or starling says as the way it says it that warns the young bird. I have been looking at a young starling under the eaves, when suddenly it has withdrawn its head and hurried out of sight, upon its parent uttering, in a marked tone, a note often used for other purposes. The parent starling, in fact, has seen me, not liked the look of me, and instantly told the young starling to withdraw.

It is well known that in many cases birds' nests harmonise so well with their immediate surroundings as to be very hard to find. Nightingales' nests are a case in point. In some woods nightingales will build their nests on the bare ground among hazel or oak stems. These nests are always made outwardly of dead oak

or hazel leaves, which makes them extremely hard to find. I know spots in woods where the nightingales build May after May; I know that the nest must be somewhere within, say, fifty or sixty square yards of where I stand, but it is often only after hiding and watching the old birds that I can find their treasures. Do the birds knowingly build their nests with a material which will make them inconspicuous to enemies, and so preserve the lives of their young? There is what I am tempted to call quite a distinct type of long-tailed titmouse in certain Hampshire woods—and elsewhere, no doubt—that builds its nest not in a thorn bush or evergreen, like most long-tailed titmice, but in the large fork of an ash or oak tree. This nest, above all others I have seen, matches its environment. The beautiful little bird adorns the outside with the same lichens as those which grow on the branches between which the nest is fixed. Does she use these lichens, recognising that they will conceal her treasures, or because of their cohesiveness—for they certainly help to glue the nest together? But there are two other possible explanations which must not be overlooked. She may use these lichens largely, if not entirely, as ornaments. No one can doubt that some birds have æsthetic tastes, that they admire the beautiful. And the lichens make the long-tailed titmouse's nest the loveliest of all English birds' nests, not excepting the finest workmanship of the wren, the chaffinch, or the goldfinch. A fourth theory might, I suppose, be put thus: The present generation of long-tailed titmice have not the slightest notion that the lichens protect (by their concealing effect) the nest; the nests, on the survival-of-the-fittest system, have tended to grow more and more like their surroundings; the nests least like their surroundings have been gradually wiped out, through the attacks of creatures of prey which would destroy young and parents. Nothing is easier than a dogma. You might choose one of these theories, declare it the right one, and the other three all wrong. Personally I shrink from it. I have no conviction in regard to this question concerning the long-tailed titmouse; but, the more I watch these things, the belief waxes that behind such matter there is Mind.

Besides the combativeness of many creatures—ordinarily meek and mild—when they have young, there is the deeply interesting and curious question of ruse practised on behalf of the young. I think it is Mr. J. Otho Paget, one of the chief authorities to-day on fox-hunting, who holds that an old vixen fox will

sometimes, to save her sore-pressed cub, cunningly cross the line of scent, and so draw off the hounds till the huntsman discovers the mistake. Jesse, in the chatty book called 'Gleanings from Natural History,' notes a statement to the effect that 'when a hind hears the hounds she will allow herself to be hunted, in order to lead them away from her fawns.' I have no experience in the matter, and cannot say whether the statement is safe or not. But I have had experience in regard to the ruse of both the partridge and the wild duck on behalf of their young. As regards the partridge, mother and father will often collaborate to cheat the intruder, man or dog, and lure him away from their young. Last summer I was within a very few feet of treading on a little family of partridges crouching on some rough ground. As I crept about the field, watching a cuckoo trying to palm off her egg on some small birds, so that she might provide her future child with a comfortable home, a pair of partridges suddenly bounded up almost in my face. They flew off a little way, then dropped to the ground and dragged themselves and cried out in agonized tones, as though they were wounded birds and I had only to go and pick them up with my hand. But I knew this ruse, and looked down, and there were the chicks, just out of the shells. I remarked on the striking likeness of these partridge chicks in general coloration to partridge eggshells. The same fact struck a friend of mine lately in regard to the lapwing chick and the lapwing eggshell. Does natural selection come in here too? Is it a sort of unconscious ruse of Nature's, by which those partridge chicks which most closely resembled, in the distant past, their eggshells tended to survive, whilst those not resembling the shells (that harmonise with their surroundings fairly well) tended to attract the notice of enemies and so be wiped out in the struggle of life? In any case, granting the harmony, the belief is again borne in upon one that behind this matter there must be Mind. Here, in the case of the partridge, male and female show almost equal affection and anxiety, though, as with the mallard (which resorts to a very similar ruse), I have noticed that the mother is the more anxious and bold of the two.

There are many other precautions taken by birds for protecting their young. I am convinced, for instance, that sometimes birds will remove the young from the nest and hide them elsewhere when an intruder has aroused their suspicions. Gilbert White gives one delightful instance of craft in a willow wren.

It was jealous of his attentions, and one day got together a bundle of moss and put this over the entrance of the nest. When White went to see how his willow wren was getting on with her brood, he could not find the nest for a while, owing to this clever expedient. Here one seems to see Mind in the little bird itself, without looking beyond. Would this be described as one of the variations which are the means by which evolution is worked out? If other willow wrens were to strike out so original a way for themselves, we might expect that the species would in the end take to making loose balls of moss with which to cover up the nest when an intruder aroused their suspicions! But there would be little chance of our living to see such a habit become fixed, for these habits take such ages to work out.

We have no word which describes the ecstatic state of beasts and birds with helpless young to rear and shield. They are hardly to be recognised, sometimes, as the same self-centred animals we know out of the breeding season. They are translated. We have to go to the Greek for the right word. This is the Greek *storgē*. The Greek, too, has also the word *antistorgē*, which describes what often takes place when *storgē* ends—for the season, that is—and the fathers, if not the mothers as well, drive their offspring away out of the neighbourhood. The robin is a strong instance of *antistorgē*. The father will assault his own son that desires, after he has reached the adult stage, still to stay about the garden or the shrubbery where he was born. I rather doubt whether robin fights end so gorily as some have supposed; in the great majority of cases, I am quite sure, bird duels between members of the same species are not to the death. Some shrewd blows are rained in—you can hear the fighting skylarks hit one another cruelly in May—a few feathers fly, and one gives in and goes off. This is what commonly happens. But it is not that the parent robin would hesitate to kill its offspring, when *antistorgē* sets in, only it is not easy to do; besides, there is no need to go to the trouble, provided he can drive his son away from the place.

Antistorgē is not invariable among wild creatures, though it is common. After the long-tailed titmice, for instance, have been reared and educationally finished off, they are allowed to remain with their parents. *Storgē* probably grows less and less as the weeks go on, but the common interest of parents and children will take its place. The whole family of titmice will sleep

together in a bunch, and so keep each other warm on bitter winter nights. Is *antistorgē* simply to be explained by the selfish fear of the parent that the child, which it has suddenly ceased to care for, will, if it remains in the place of its birth, prove an awkward rival? This is the explanation of the parents' hostility, no doubt. But the effect is so remarkable and important as to suggest the question: may not this hostility be part of a much larger plan of Nature's? Thanks, to some extent, to this hostility, a general and even distribution of wild life over the earth is ensured. There does not arise the inconvenience of overcrowding in particular districts, which might occur if the deep affection of animal parents for their young lasted for a longer period. Between the parental affection of the lower animals and of mankind this marked difference exists: animals never care for their offspring when these are full grown; *storgē* then utterly dies out. In the case of human beings, the parental instinct often lasts throughout life.

The love, then, of birds, quadrupeds, and perhaps some insects, for their offspring, and their grief for the loss of these through any mishap, are much shorter-lived than is the case with human beings. But they are intense. I have seen a pair of spotted flycatchers, for the best part of two days after their solitary child has perished in the nest, haunting the spot, and uttering cries of distress when one went near. On the other hand, if only one or two of the young have perished through exposure to heat or cold, or some other mishap, but other young remain alive, the old birds will not waste time and energy in lament. I have seen during the past season a garden warbler bringing food to her family over a chick she had very recently lost, part of whose dead body dangled piteously over the side of the nest. And I have known much the same thing to occur with other birds. We know that the hedge-sparrow will look on unconcerned whilst the blind and naked young cuckoo pushes out of the nest the rightful occupants: so long as she has this hideous inquiline to feed and brood over she is happy. The male partridge, as we have seen, is almost as good a family bird as the female: both are far better than the common wild pheasants, which make indifferent mothers and perhaps worse fathers. Some male animals take in hand the eggs so soon as they are all laid, and the female relaxes. Then there is the male Surinam toad, who solemnly takes the eggs one by one and places them in the folds of the female Surinam toad's

skin, where they are to hatch out. Among other amphibians in whom the family instinct is well developed are the frogs which wind the string of eggs round their bodies, hide while these develop, and then go down to the water with them. Male spiders often have no chance to play a part in the management of the eggs. It is a strange fact that many of the female spiders loathe and would take the lives of their mates; yet they seem to be deeply attached to the interests of their young. Some of them carry about their eggs in a little white silky sack attached to their bodies. In my garden I have taken away from a female spider, travelling among the clods of the herbaceous border, her precious bundle of eggs, and watched the effect. Her agitation has been marked. She has searched about for the eggs, seizing and, by the exquisite spider sense of feel, examining minute bits of soil, &c., to see whether any of these be the missing treasure. I have seen her seize an armadillo wood-louse, which has instantly curled itself up into a round ball, after its custom in crises. Kirby and Spence, indeed, considered that insects are capable of affections for their young quite equal to those of the large quadrupeds, and will suffer privations on their account, and take large risks in defending them. They mention the case of one spider (*Aranea saccata*), whose young attach themselves in clusters to her back, head, and belly when she moves about: she so carries them till their first moult, feeding them all the while. The earwig broods over her young much as a hen over her chicks: they follow her about, as the young amphipods, it is said, follow their mother.

Whether *antistorgē* sets in among spiders I cannot say, but probably it is by no means confined to vertebrate animals. Jesse firmly believed that a spider he experimented with swallowed her young. Whether this was a sort of mad jealousy, as in the case of dogs, which sometimes do the same, or whether it was with the object of protecting them, cannot be said. In regard to the swallowing of young as a protective measure, there is the curious statement that the female viper will do this. This statement is stoutly denied. A strong authority on English reptiles, however, Doctor Gerald Leighton, the editor of the 'Field Naturalist's Quarterly,' is neutral in the matter. He points out that it would not be physically impossible for a viper to do so. One of the house masters at Winchester, the Rev. G. M. A. Hewett, a well-known entomologist, says he saw a female viper in the New

Forest open her mouth, into which sprang her young. My friend Miss A. E. Darwin, first cousin of Charles Darwin, an observer of animals all her life, has told me that she too has seen the same incident. My own view is that the observers may be deceived by the quickness of the young vipers' movements. But, apart from the question of courtesy, it is unwise to discredit the positive statements of field naturalists. I shall end with an illustration of this, which is also a charming instance of parental affection in a male bird. Discredit has been thrown on the statement that the cock blackcap sometimes actually sings as he sits on the eggs of his mate. But I have seen and heard him singing as he sat on the eggs. In this case mistake was out of the question: here were no quick, deceptive movements. I stood still and took careful note of the bird, of his black cap, of his song, of the nest, and, when he had flown off, of the eggs.

THE OLD WOMAN OF WESEL.

ONE lovely day in autumn I was sitting under a trellis of vines at Capeln above Coblenz, a little place dominated by the absurd Cockney-Gothic castle of Stolzenfels. I was alone, and was drinking half a bottle of Rhenish wine. At another table hard by was a gentleman, similarly engaged. Of what nationality he was I knew not. After a while he tendered me his snuff-box.

‘*Herzlichen Dank,*’ said I, taking a pinch.

‘You are heartily welcome,’ he replied.

‘So ho!’ I exclaimed. ‘We both hail from the right and tight little island.’

‘Yes,’ he answered; ‘and I have found my own companionship dull, and possibly it may be the same with you.’

‘It is so, indeed; so now let us sit at the same table. *Kellner!*’ I called; ‘*eine Flasche Zeltinger.*’

We talked of this and that, and finally I observed, for want of something else to say, ‘Alack, the bloom of the year is passing away. The grapes have been gathered, and the sun is leaving us to give warmth to the antipodes, and to ripen the Australian vines.’

‘Why not?’ asked he; ‘we must not grudge it them. It is the law of the ecliptic.’

‘Of course it is. But one looks at things from a selfish point of view.’

‘The law of the ecliptic is the law of life.’

‘I do not understand that.’

‘All life, all progress, is in curves,’ said he. ‘Look at those men rowing: the boat is propelled in a vibratory course. The fish swims by a series of sweeps from side to side; nothing goes directly to its point. What is light but a series of undulations, and colour is the breaking of these waves on the retina. We all advance by ups and downs, by swerves to the right and to the left. You cannot even walk in any other fashion. The whole social and political progress of the world is undulatory.’

‘What an idea!’

‘So said I when it was first propounded to me. But I have

come to see that so it is, and so it must be. Are you idle or busy ?

'The former, or I would not be here.'

'Can you spare me half an hour ?'

'An hour and a half if you will favour me. I have absolutely nothing to do.'

'If so, I will tell you how I came by this theory of life. I did not originate it ; it came to me from the Old Woman of Wesel.'

'The what ?'

'A woman at Wesel, not Ober Wesel, but the other place on the Lower Rhine. Listen, and you shall hear the story :

'Wesel is perhaps the most depressing place on earth. At least, so I thought one October day, when I visited it. A cold wind blew, rain fell, the streets were sloppy, my hotel was uncomfortable. There was no warmth in my bedroom ; in the Speise Saal hung a smell of stale tobacco and beer. There was no company there ; there was not even the *Kölnische Zeitung* to peruse. I had no books with me. I had no arrears of correspondence to make up. There was nothing for me to do but to go forth in my overcoat and with my umbrella, and see the sights of the town before night closed in. But the sights of Wesel are not many. The great church of St. Willibrod is regarded as the finest specimen of Late Gothic on the Rhine. It is built of small blocks of tufa, the colour of which is that of London clay bricks ; and it has been so scraped and sandpapered that all the mellowness of age has been removed. The church in position and proportion reminds one of a squatting goose, turning its plucked rear to the town, thrusting it inconveniently upon the small market-place. Beyond the west front, dominated by the lanky spire, is a great void—a blank space looking like a military exercising-ground.

'After I had studied the church I sauntered across the bleak square to the ancient ramparts, now planted with trees in a hobbled condition, not yet grown to maturity and stateliness. The bastions command no view, not even of the Rhine, which has retreated from them ; and all that can be seen from them is the huge iron arches that hold up the railway bridge, curving over the roadway.

'The rain had ceased ; I seated myself on a damp bench and lighted a cigar. Then I drew from my pocket a little red-covered Hermann's "Fahrplan Buch," to discover by what train, next morning, I could get away from this wretched place.

‘Whilst thus engaged, I heard a moaning as of some one in pain at a little distance from me to the right in the thicket. I listened attentively, and when I had located the spot whence the sound issued, I rose in search of the sufferer.

‘I speedily came on an elderly woman lying under some bushes. Her garments were excessively shabby, and were drenched with rain.

“What is the matter with you? Can I assist you?” I asked in German, which I can speak with some fluency, as I knelt by the poor creature, and raised her head and shoulders in my arms.

“Oh, good sir, I am down, down to the lowest point of my curve,” she said. “If you will have the charity, help me to reach the hospital.”

‘I drew her to an upright position. In leaving the path she had stumbled over a root and had fallen headlong among the bushes down the slope of the glacis, and had consequently been unable to raise herself unassisted. She must have lain long in this position, for her clothing was sopping, and as I raised her, water oozed from it.

“Can you walk?” I inquired.

“If you will help me—to the bench; I must rest there for a few minutes. Then, with your gracious assistance, I will proceed on my way.”

‘I supported her tottering limbs to the seat I had so recently vacated.

“You must be bitterly cold,” I said, “drenched to the skin as you are. Take this.” I drew off my great-coat and insisted on thrusting her arms into the sleeves; then I wrapped it about her.

“Ach, but you are a good man,” she said, “and I give you my hearty thanks. I have been down to the lowest depth in the great revolution of Life and soon shall be mounting again. See you that bird?” she asked, pointing to a water-wagtail that was skimming over the moat. “That bird advances in a series of curves, now up and then down, but ever forwards. That is Life. But look yonder”—she indicated the railway arches—“there you have all the curves broken and discontinued, all are upwards, none reversed. In God’s work all is continuous, the other is the way with men.”

‘The woman surprised me beyond expression. I was unable to follow the current of her thoughts.

"Now," she said, "if you will be so kind as to let me lean on you, and if you will put an arm about me, I think I shall be able to proceed to the hospital."

'I lifted her to her feet, and we made our way to the town. As we paced along slowly she continued talking, some while distinctly and connectedly, but next moment she muttered to herself sentences that were unintelligible to me. Encountering a policeman, I summoned him to my assistance, and between us we conveyed her to the hospital, and committed her to the charge of a Sister of Mercy. Before leaving I asked permission to call again in a couple of hours to learn how the poor creature was, and to see her once more, as I purposed quitting Wesel on the morrow. Leave was readily granted.

'Accordingly I returned to the Hostel Dolorous, and ordered supper. The principal meal with Germans is at half-past twelve in the day, and for *Abendessen* one orders by the carte. I chose out a couple of portions from the list shown me, and ordered a bottle of Mosel wine. In waiting, I turned over in my head what had happened, and the words of the old woman; but of them I could make neither heads nor tails.

'When I revisited the hospital I was taken to the ward where the old creature lay, comfortably in bed. She had been looking forward to my return, and her face brightened when I took a seat by her side. Her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes blazed with a feverish light.

"I am glad that you are come," she said, "you have been so good to me, and I have been desirous of telling you many things, as some return for your assistance. That which I said to you is true. Life is curvilinear, and it is interminable in its undulations. We pass along waves, now we are at the apex, then are in the trough. I am in the latter now, but it will not be so for long, then I shall mount again. That is one great verity that I have communicated to you. But there is another, unsuspected by you, unknown to others. But I will confide this truth to you. It is that to every man or woman living there is given a double. You have your double—I have mine. Whilst the one is up the other is down, but carries on its predestined progress in the great succession of curves. At a certain moment the lines of life cross, and when they cross, then all the past is forgotten by each. But life does not end, it proceeds in an upward or in a downward sweep. Only at the moments of birth and death do the lines intersect. Now I

must tell you about my double. She is a great singer and actress at St. Petersburg. She is thought much of and is highly paid ; the Prince Vladimirski is her most devoted slave. Indeed, it is whispered that they have been privately married ; I do not think that. They say that he would willingly withdraw her from the stage and perhaps acknowledge her as Princess Vladimirski. But she is vain, not ambitious ; she loves flattery and adulation and admiration. She thinks, perhaps, as a great lady she would be looked down upon and be cold-shouldered by those greater than herself. She loves the flare of the footlights, the paint and the spangles and the gauze, and she stays on in defiance of the Prince's wishes. See !" she drew her hand from under the bedclothes, raised it aloft, and let it waver down to the coverlet ; then drew it under again. "There," said she, "so will my double decline, and as she descends I shall rise. When our life-lines cross, we shall each die, but life goes on, a new life begins."

"Stay," I said ; "this is incredible. She, I suppose, must be young and handsome, and you are old."

"Old," laughed the woman. "We are the same age—to a day, but I am broken and withered with poverty and labour and suffering, and she is well conserved in her bloom. But tell me now, is there anyone you would desire to see ?"

"Yes," said I ; "just at this moment, there is borne in on my mind a friend in London, Lady Destrier. I wonder whether she has a double, and of what sort this double may be."

'As I spoke the woman was biting her wrist, and her teeth brought out blood. Dipping her finger in it, she drew it suddenly across my eyes.

"Now," she said, "let me take your hand, and do you close your eyes."

'She gripped my hand. Her skin was burning. As she had desired, I let my eyelids fall.

'Instantly I was out of Wesel, and in a box at Her Majesty's Theatre in town. In the box sat Lady Destrier, Sir Michael was sitting back, half asleep, and Charles Cordwallis was talking eagerly to the lady. At the same time that I saw this, I felt the hand of the old woman clasping and scorching mine.

"Dear Lady Destrier," said Cordwallis, "I do so wish that I could interest you in the wrongs and the agonies of the Macedonians."

"I fear that you cannot," she replied.

"But surely you should; you ought to be interested in a people striving to free their necks from a hated and a galling yoke. If there be any manhood in them, they must rise. Only slaves will lie down and allow themselves to be kicked and spat upon. How would you feel, Lady Destrier, if you were spurned and insulted?"

"I cannot conceive of such an eventuality. My dear Charlie, we are not the knights errant of Christendom whose romantic function it is to redress the wrongs of humanity—or supposed wrongs. As to these Macedonians, they are not such ill-used creatures as you suppose. From all I hear, the Turks are the most affable and gentlemanly beings, and the Bulgarians are a set of cut-throats who must be suppressed with a strong hand."

"You are misinformed," said Cordwallis. "Dear Lady Destrier, I wish you would read the reports of those who have been through the country, have visited them, their burned villages, and know what is the real condition of affairs."

"No, no, Charlie, I cannot wade through all that stuff. It may be as you say. It may be that there is gross exaggeration, a partisan-coloured report."

"I assure you," urged Cordwallis vehemently, "this is not the case. The reports of our committee are genuinely true. What is more, I have it on good authority that the Foreign Office did receive accounts of the most harrowing description relative to the horrors perpetrated by the Turks in Macedonia, and word was sent to the Embassy at Constantinople that no more of this nature were to be transmitted to London; so that should a question be raised in the House, it might be safely answered that no such information had been received."

"And rightly so," said Lady Destrier. "We do not want to sup full of horrors, and that concerning people in whom we have no concern."

"But we ought to have concern, for it was we who thrust them back into chains by the Treaty of Berlin, with promises of redress that have never been fulfilled."

"Come, come, I will give you a guinea towards the relief fund; and now let us change the subject. Look at Lady Haverford. What a mass of diamonds is she encased in! But I suspect paste, as she would hardly run the risk of wearing so many real stones at the opera."

The fiery hand that gripped mine was relaxed for a moment, and then closed on mine tighter than before. I opened my eyes.

"Well," said the Old Woman of Wesel, "have you seen her?"

"Yes."

"And have heard what was said?"

"Every word."

"Shut your eyes again and see her double."

'I did as I was bidden, and lo! I was in a strange land; everything about me was indeed strange. There was a village in ruins, with smoke rising from it. A church, very mean, with a dome battered and half broken down. I saw sacred pictures lying scattered about, trampled into the dirt. A smell of blood and burning filled the air; on all sides lay heaps of tumbled clothes covering motionless human forms—dead doubtless.

'Against the wall of a house, the rafters of which had fallen in, and were smouldering, and from which occasionally leaped up a flame, sat a woman. Good heavens! It was Lady Destrier—the face was hers, the full eyes hers—but this face and these eyes had not in them the lady's expression of listlessness. It was Lady Destrier, but in Bulgarian costume: the same woman, the same colouring, the same profile; but not the same in everything else. A poor creature with dishevelled hair, with a horrible wound in her throat, clasping a baby in her arms, and her bosom dabbled with the child's blood. She swayed herself, the agony of despair in her eyes; she kissed, she hugged her babe; and when for a moment she loosed it, or laid it on her lap, I saw that the child was dead, it had been transfixed by a bayonet.

"My dove, my white lily," she cried, "open your eyes, look on your mother, my soul! my precious pearl! Thy father has been killed, thy mother outraged, thy house burnt. May the curse of God rest on the hated Turks and blight them! My soul! my idol! Light of my eyes! put up thy dear lips and kiss thy mother, if but for once, only once more, that I may die content!"

'Then she laid the dead infant upon the ground before her, and, with outstretched arms, cried, "O thou! the All Holy, the Mother of Sorrows! Thou hadst thy little one, thy Jesus! He lay at thy breast, He wept, and thou didst comfort Him with a lullaby and kisses! Hear me from Heaven above! Give me back, give me back for one hour, for one minute, my little babe, my angel!"

'She clasped her hands, she stooped over the child, looking at the still face, listening for a breath from the lips. And all the

while she gave not a thought to the awful gash in her own throat, from which the blood oozed. Then, from round the corner came an old man, with a scalp wound; he was in a flowing priest's gaberdine, and he said: "Anoka, God has taken the child."

"It was the Turks, may they be accursed of God! they ran him through with their bayonets. May the blight of Heaven rest on them all, and above all on their murderous-minded Sultan! My child!"—she returned to consideration of the silent figure before her—"Oh my child! Oh, Mother of Heaven! Oh, Queen of Sorrows, help me!"

"The Mother of Sorrows," said the priest, who was himself dabbled with blood, "had to give up her Son to the murderers; and they crucified Him. But there is a turn in Life's wheel, and they were cast down into Hell, and He and the Holy Mother are exalted to Heaven."

"I felt the hot hand that clutched mine relaxed, and I opened my eyes.

"Well," said the Old Woman of Wesel, "have you seen your lady's double?"

"I remained silent, strange thoughts worked in my brain.

"Do you not see," said she, "that everything in Life is double? That each life has its counterpart, but placed in precisely the opposite position to which it finds itself at the time? Presently the lower life mounts, and as it does so, the double descends. You cannot lift one bucket out of a well without lowering the other. Now it comes to the turn of Anoka to ascend; as she crosses the line of life of your lady all is changed. She will enter on a new condition, one of great prosperity. She will become the favourite of the Sultan, in his harem, and will have jewels and rich garments and slaves to wait on her."

"And Lady Destrier?"

"As the lines cross, she will be born again and become a hand in a match factory, live in the London slums, and die of a rotted jaw, produced by the phosphorus with which she has worked. God is just! Why should your lady have all the good things and likewise Anoka evil things? It will be but just that the latter should be comforted and the former tormented in the new stage of curvilinear life."

"Then I said hesitatingly, 'I suppose that I also have a double?'"

"Certainly you have; would you like to see him?"

"I do desire it."

"Then shut your eyes once more."

She laid hold of my hand again.

I obeyed her; and saw a squalid room in the East-end of London. It reeked with human exhalations, fried bloaters, and the smell of leather.

The room was occupied by a lean pallid man, evidently a cobbler, who was sitting at a dingy window, engaged upon patching an old pair of boots. The apartment was tenanted as well by his wife, a slatternly woman, with a baby at her breast, by her girls, two daughters grown up, and by a son. Also by a lodger—good God! myself—my own very self, white, with hollow eyes, just recovered from a severe illness; myself seated half clothed on a burst and filthy mattress of straw placed on the floor; myself—greedily gnawing at a piece of bread on which was a shred of herring.

"It's of no use, Garge," said the woman. George is my Christian name; but she was addressing my double, not me. "We can't keep you 'ere no longer, you ain't done no work and brought us a penny not for a month."

"How could I when I was ill?"

"That's all fine enough, but we ain't agoin' to support you no longer. We can't afford it."

"You've sold my tools," said my double, "and that's paid yer 'andsome."

"'Andsome ain't the word. It's just paid fer keepin' yer alive. Now yer tools is gone. We ain't lords and ladies nussed in the lap of haffluence as can afford to be charitable. We be poor folk, and hardly earn enough to keep our own bellies full."

"I am not strong enough to look for work."

"I can't 'elp that. Out you must toddle into the street."

"Gor'," said the poor convalescent, "I'd sell my soul for a cup o' milk. I feels a sort of a cravin' as bread won't fill."

"Then you may lap the dirty water out of the gutter," said the woman, "yer won't get any milk from me; why, we ha'n't got none for ourselves. Can't afford it."

"I don't know what to do," sighed my sick double.

"Look 'ere," said the cobbler, turning round, "you go and commit a larceny; just steal something out of a shop and get committed, and they'll make yer pretty comfortable in gaol."

“Aye, I'll do that. There's nothing else left for me to do,” said the enfeebled wretch, rising with difficulty from his mattress.

‘The fiery hand that clasped mine was loosened. I opened my eyes.

“Have you seen your double?” the woman inquired.

“I have seen him,” I exclaimed; “and I must go.”

“Whither?” she inquired, with her burning eyes fixed on mine.

“To London. I must look for my brother—my double—and help him.”

‘And,’ said I, ‘did you find your double?’

‘My dear sir,’ said the stranger, ‘everyone may find his unfortunate double if he looks for him below the surface, among the submerged.’

S. BARING-GOULD.

*A FEW CHARACTERS IN A WORKHOUSE
WARD.*

I do not remember to have read anywhere of one of the most interesting points in our great workhouses—the characters of the occupants of the ‘aged’ wards, all of whom must be sixty years of age or over. The inmates of our public institutions are so often treated in the mass that few people can have realised the enormous range that their personalities and individualities cover. Educated and ignorant, crotchety and good-humoured, open and self-centred, cheerful and morose, they rub shoulders day after day, and year after year, till the common leveller takes them to another bourn. And it is hard to say how much relief and pleasure a little real sympathy and genuine interest from outsiders would not give to these old crusted characters.

One of the first things a visitor to the workhouse cannot fail to notice is the great difference in the human and social atmosphere that pervades the men’s and the women’s wards. Especially is this the case where the aged are spending their last days.

On both sides of ‘the House’ the wards are much the same. Long and bare, their chief characteristic is their cleanliness. The long walls, painted some sad tone of grey-blue, are broken only by the windows, which are quite destitute of any kind of hangings. Long, bare, well-scrubbed forms stand against the walls, and before them stretch long, bare, well-scrubbed tables, whilst beneath them both is the bare, well-scrubbed floor. Of windows there are many, but the artificial lighting is usually quite inadequate, with the result that on a winter’s afternoon the women’s ward looks horribly ghostly with so much white deal and so many grey-garbed, still figures seated in the dim light.

When you enter the precincts of masculinity you interrupt a pleasant hum of conversation, and the inhabitants show a lively interest in your presence. If there are no lynx-eyed officials within sight or hearing, they may even offer the lady visitor a small amount of good-natured chaff. But, apart from this, they always greet the stranger with a cheerful ‘Good-day,’ and return with interest the new visitor’s nod and smile. Any remark you

may offer is invariably considered as general conversation, and if the subject is of a controversial nature your opinion is soon challenged, and more or less good-tempered argument follows.

It is not until you have become a permanent institution as a visitor amongst them that you hear any individual or private troubles, and then rarely without deliberate seeking on your part. There seems, too, an almost entire absence of those small jealousies that are so common amongst the women. This is particularly noticeable in the matter of gifts of books, tobacco, or sweets. The men always settle the question of division by saying, 'Give it to —; he will share it out all fair and square;' whilst amongst the women it is impossible to find anyone who will undertake the task. 'No; they'll only grumble and say I've given more to my favourites,' said the fairest-minded woman I knew in the ward; and I found by bitter experience that that was so.

My first gift of periodicals to the aged women's ward met with a humorous result. On my entrance I placed the papers on the table, and forgot them until I was leaving. Then I hastily handed them to a sad-looking old dame, thinking it would please her to distribute them. A fortnight afterwards the officials told me that the old woman, whose failing eyesight prevented her from reading a word, had considered the whole parcel (containing about thirty papers) to be a present from myself, and had placed it in her locker, refusing to give it up. The officials did not like to take the papers from her by force, as she insisted that I had given them to her. I remonstrated in vain. With tears in her eyes she clung to her treasure, repeating again and again that I had given the bundle to her; and eventually we had to leave the papers in her possession.

The men seem to avoid by instinct the formal rows of seats. Hands in pockets, when working hours are over, they lounge or lean wherever they can find an available prop; and thus lend to the ward an apparently easy air of comfort, which is, however, I am afraid, of a somewhat superficial nature.

The women, on the other hand, sit in rows, for the most part silent and listless, thus making the long, dreary ward, which is guiltless of decoration, look more dreary still. They return a dull, stony stare to the stranger's smile, and any remark offered generally, even one relating to so common a topic as the weather, seldom meets with a reply. The whole atmosphere is chilly and forbidding, and it needs an almost irrepressible spirit and much

patience to break down the barrier of reserve. When, however, this has been successfully accomplished, the visitor finds that each cotton dress covers a sorrowful heart, which is jealously nursing its own particular load of trouble and pain. Generally speaking, nothing on earth will persuade the sufferer to unburden herself to her companions in distress, nor will anything make one of them believe that she is surrounded by women who are the victims of troubles of a nature and poignancy very similar to her own. To offer such a suggestion is to destroy your influence with them and to give mortal offence.

At first I thought these differences between the men and the women were due to the genial atmosphere of the pipe, which the men over sixty years of age are allowed to enjoy when the working hours are over. But afterwards I arrived at the conclusion that the difference is inherent in the nature of things. A man goes out into the world, and rubs shoulders with all kinds of his fellows, and thus becomes tolerant and companionable. He sees too many of the big tragedies of life to be able to retain an ill-proportioned amount of self-pity for his own troubles. In fact, the whole system of his life assists him to get the most that is possible out of existence in a workhouse ward, if either his faults or misfortunes take him there in his old age. On the other hand, a woman's life, spent more often than not quite apart from the world, in her little corner of one or two rooms, where she sees life only from her own point of view, breeds a spirit of narrowness and intolerance, and unfits her for the common life she is called upon to live in the workhouse. In this stage of existence man is certainly the more fortunate, for the very thing that helps him to forget his own troubles and to find some amusement in life—the presence of his fellow-man in fairly large numbers—only adds to the discomfort and misery of the woman.

The first smile I gained in the aged women's ward came from a plump, old Irishwoman, whom all the officials called Patsy. But for this warm-hearted old soul I doubt whether I should ever have had the courage to attempt to talk to the long row of stony-eyed sphinxes that met my timid gaze. Her 'Sure, me darlan', and have ye ever been to Ould Oireland?' uttered in a boisterous voice, full of indescribable richness and mirth, dissolved the chill that was creeping round my heart, and made me feel quite at my ease. It took me many, many weeks to gain the confidence of the other inmates; but when, after admitting that I had never

been to Ireland, I recalled the names of two remote Irish ancestors from the tombs of family tradition, Patsy's heart was won.

It is curious to note the power of environment over our qualities. The workhouse seems to have the power of making saints to dwindle and sinners to shine. Outside the workhouse Patsy, I am afraid, had been a thorough-going sinner; but inside, where she had no opportunity to revel in her besetting sins of drink and dirt, her kind warm heart and her genial goodwill towards all men placed a halo of beauty around her fit for the brow of a saint.

I saw Patsy frequently for some two or three years, but though she suffered much pain during that period I never heard one word of complaint. Many a time, when some of their more trying charges had ruffled the tempers of the officials, I have seen Patsy bring back the smile and good-humour, for few could resist her rich-toned laughter and cheerful, irresponsible philosophy.

'Och! me darlan', and it was bad,' she would reply in answer to questions as to some violent bout of suffering. 'Sure, it was very bad; but the holy Father' (or 'the good doctor,' or 'the blessed matron,' or somebody else) 'was very kind;' and Patsy would forget to tell you more about the pain, and wander off into a by-path about the goodness and kindness of the various officials. If Patsy's view of the matter was correct, the officers of the workhouse were as nice a set of people as it is possible to collect together.

Patsy had two deep sorrows, of which she only spoke to those who had quite won her heart. One was the loss by death of her 'beautiful girl,' and the other was the knowledge that she would never see the 'Ould Countrie' again. But, strong as these inflictions were, her happy habit of dwelling with the better side of things supplied her with compensations.

'Sure, and it's the Ould Countrie I'm after seein' most,' she would tell you; 'but the holy Father is that good—it's all about it that he tells me. And if it hadn't been that I'd left it meself—why, it's there I'd be now, isn't it?'

Or again, after telling you, her eyes streaming with tears, how her 'beautiful girl' had kept her for years by doing laundry work, she would brighten with 'But I gave her a beautiful death, me darlan'. I spent the last penny of the insurance' (which, by the way, was 30*l.*) 'on her wake. And if it hadn't been that

she'd gone first—sure, I couldn't have done that. And I wouldn't have known ye and be talkin' to ye now, would I, me dear ?'

Next to Patsy, and very much irritated by her full-blooded cheerfulness, sat a thin, sharp-visaged woman, whose religious views condemned poor Patsy as an idolater and consigned her to eternal torment. When not at work she had always her Bible in her hand, but I am afraid it gave her little comfort. Even the belief she held so strongly—that she had always lived a just and godly life, and was a saved being—seemed of little help to her, for it only made her more intolerant of the faulty folk around her, and cut her off from every chance of companionship.

All her life she had been a conscientious, hard-working, general servant in a religious family of limited means. Her constant labour had, in truth, worn out her constitution. Then, as old age was creeping upon her, the elder members of the family had died, and the younger ones had been scattered to the four corners of the earth. There was nobody left to look after poor Martha, and for a time she had lived on her small savings, until she had drifted into this—her last refuge. And there, amongst many miserable beings, I believe Martha was almost the most miserable. A loyal, trusty, and self-sacrificing servant to the few people she had known and loved, misfortune had changed her into a sour, fault-finding, discontented old woman, with never a word but of blame to say to or about anyone.

As a result she was heartily detested by the officials and sneered at by her fellows in misfortune, whom she shunned as absolutely as circumstances allowed. And so she led a bitter, lonely life, to which even her clergyman was unable to offer any palliation, for she disliked his way of administering his religion, considered him urgently in need of 'grace,' and had grave doubts of his ultimate 'salvation.'

I made several efforts to soften Martha's feelings towards the minor faults of her fellows, but she always confounded me with appropriate texts which seemed to support her views, and the final result of my efforts was that I, too, was placed on Martha's list of lost souls. Possibly she got more comfort from her religion than I imagined, for sometimes in the midst of her complaints against her God for deserting her in her old age she would break off into a vehement protestation of faith.

When I last saw her she was suffering severely in body as well

as spirit, and I could only hope that gentle death would soon translate her to a sphere where her great loyalty would be rewarded by perfect spiritual peace.

A contrast to both Patsy and Martha was a placid-faced, white-handed woman, who, day in, day out, sat quietly stitching at the narrow white bands which were to make frills for the inmates' caps. The stitches were marvels of regularity and evenness, and after a time to me they seemed symbolic of Millicent herself. Always the same, in the same seat, with the same work, always the same answer—'I am very well, thank you, miss,' given in the same quiet, expressionless tone. I never saw her talk to anyone, and I never induced her to talk to me, although she interested me very much.

That she was a woman of high-class education I was sure, but I never found out anything about her life or what had brought her to such a pass at the end of it. When I talked to her she would lay down her work with a polite show of interest. But I felt all the time that she was thinking her own thoughts, and I used to wonder what they were. And I still wonder whether Millicent was simply nothing—a mere mindless stitching-machine—or whether she was a deeply thinking woman, living a life of her own behind that quiet exterior, entirely independent of her grim and dreary surroundings. I incline to the latter view, and I feel sure that her inner life was sweet and clean, and that her beautiful placid face was its mirror.

Near Millicent sat an equally good needle-woman, but a very different character. Bright-eyed, sprightly, talkative Mary had been a lady's-maid for a number of years. Many and marvellous were the tales she told of her travels with her 'ladies,' and after a while, when earthquakes, railway accidents, and adventures by sea became matters of every-day occurrence, one was forced to believe that Mary's imagination supplemented her memory.

It caused me some surprise that a woman who had been in such good service as she evidently had should find her way into 'the House' in her old age; but I found on inquiry that she had been too changeable, and had served too many mistresses, for any one of them to take very much interest in her. Her quick temper and somewhat haughty pride had made long service impossible; and although she had received good wages, her savings had been

small, for Mary had been inordinately fond of finery. Even now her cap was put on at a coquettish angle, and the very pins in her frock¹ seemed to be placed with a greater eye to smartness and effect than those of any other inmate. She dearly loved to look at a fashion paper, and would discuss the latest styles with as much zest as a young lady about to purchase her trousseau.

But Mary's great topic was 'good families.' She knew and delighted in the private history and, I am afraid, the scandals of many; and by this knowledge of hers she measured all people. You increased or declined in importance in Mary's eyes according to the amount you did or did not know about the 'good families.' She would forgive you much ignorance if you were willing to learn; but those who neither knew nor wanted to know deserved and received Mary's contempt.

Unfortunately for the peace of Mary's corner of the ward her companions were in this undesirable condition, and the result was continual warfare. Mary had a fine control of words, and she would sit for hours quietly working, but at the same time pouring out a perpetual stream of scathing remarks, in excellent English, which left her companions and their ancestors for several generations back without a shred of character, and indiscriminately assigned the gutter as the birthplace of them all. This naturally led to reprisals. But for some time Mary triumphed, for her companions, not having her perfect control of language, used to lose their tempers, bluster, and get punished. After a time, however, the officials grasped the situation. Then justice was done, and Mary became a martyr to her pride in our English nobility, for she, too, was deprived of several afternoons out.

Near Mary was a worn, grey-looking woman who took no part whatever in the quarrels. When not at work she sat with her hands lying limply in her lap, and her eyes staring straight in front of her, with a sadly frightened expression in them. Of her companions she took not the slightest notice, but the first kind word spoken to her brought forth a flood of uncontrollable tears. This happened repeatedly, and it was some months before she could gain sufficient mastery of her emotions to be able to talk to me.

¹ At this workhouse the women's bodices are made without fastenings. They are all cut fairly large, and are then lapped over and pinned down the front to fit the wearer.

Meanwhile I learnt from the officials that she was 'just in and had 'seen better days,' and that she was not in the 'over 60 ward' on account of her age, but owing to feeble health. Worn and grey though she appeared, her age was very little over forty, and when first she entered she had been put to the wash-tub, but had broken down. Then the doctor had certified her as entirely unfit for that or any of the able-bodied tasks, and she had been sent into the 'aged ward,' where needle-work is done for a few hours a day. When, after some months, she told me the story of her life, what a pitiful tale of errors in judgment and helpless, hopeless incompetence it was !

Born of comfortable, well-to-do provincial tradespeople, she had been brought up 'as a lady'; that is to say, she had not been allowed to soil her hands. Before she was twenty she married the son of another tradesman in the same town, whose parents seemed to have had much the same idea of education and equipment for the world. They had sent him to a boarding-school and he was 'a gentleman.' The parents between them set up the newly-married couple in business in a London suburb. They failed. The parents started them again, and again they failed. And so it went on, time after time—failure, failure, failure !

His parents died, and the money they left followed the same course as that which had previously been spent. Her people had long before given up business, and the constant demands of their daughter on their purse had reduced them to penury in their old age. At last no further supplies of money were forthcoming, and then, like a couple of hopeless children, they had lived on in the midst of their comforts, until one day everything was seized for debt, and they were put into the street. There they had wandered hand in hand until the police had taken them to 'the House.'

One thing only remained to them out of the wreck of their lives—their love for each other. So there she sat, clumsily doing her task. Day by day she grew weaker and more strange, for a fretting sorrow was fast wearing her life away. There she sat, counting the hours till the week should go by and she would see her husband again. Then at the sight of her dear one's broken form, clad in the coarse workhouse garb, the bitter, blinding tears would choke her, and she could only sit with her hand in his until the hour came for them again to part. I felt quite glad

when the doctor told me that he thought the time was not far distant when for them there would be no more partings.

The tragedy of their history lay in the fact that this pair of unsophisticated children had, in their hopeless efforts to earn a living, spent a sum of money which, safely invested at quite a moderate rate of interest, would have kept them in great comfort all their lives.

I have only given a very incomplete sketch of a few of the fifty characters who are grouped together in the aged-women's ward. Some there undoubtedly are who are cleaner and better cared for in 'the House' than they have ever been before. These are fairly contented, although they are always foremost in the fights for such privileges as the law allows. But the majority, I am afraid, look upon 'the House' as a disgraceful prison, and the knowledge that they will die there embitters their last days. I have known several who have found comfort in the fact that their children or friends were still paying their insurance, and they hoped thus to escape a 'pauper's grave.'

Much of the discontent, too, is so human. There are lovers of the open air fretting for freedom and a sight of the fields; parents grieving over the ingratitude of children who have forgotten them in their need; thoughtful people craving for one hour of solitude and space for quiet prayer.

It is curious that to enter the 'aged ward,' which apparently offers so few attractions, should form the one desire of those shut out from it. But so it is. Just across the corridor, in the 'able-bodied women's ward' (which, by the way, contains all the women between sixteen and sixty years of age who are not incapacitated from wielding a scrubbing-brush), sit some eight or ten women, of about fifty-eight years, whose one dream of bliss is to cross that corridor. They impatiently await the arrival of the day which will proclaim them sixty, when they hope to pass from 'able-bodied' to 'aged' and share the envied privileges of shorter hours of work and an afternoon cup of tea.

It is not often that a woman willingly adds to her age, but such is the attraction of that afternoon cup of tea enjoyed by the 'aged' that it is often done. Women of over fifty-five constantly assert that they have passed the magic portals of sixty, and the officials unkindly produce documentary evidence to refute their

claims. I hope though, when they do attain their desire, the idle hours will not prove to be snares for unhappy thoughts.

Were I an inmate of 'the House' my ambition would be to be infirm as well as aged; for then I should sit in one of the pretty, bright, little 'infirm wards' and become one of a family of six or eight.

In one of these cosy wards sat 'Granny,' the oldest inmate. She claimed to have lived a hundred and three years. As the officials could obtain no evidence one way or the other, they conceded her the honour of great age, and Granny received many visitors and much homage.

Looking at her face, one was inclined to credit her with her full claim. What a wonderful face it was! Rembrandt's mother would have seemed smooth-skinned in comparison with Granny's minutely patterned parchment. Each year as it passed her set its hand there, and the future years, should there be any for her, will find great difficulty in the matter of space.

If Granny has ever sorrowed or fretted she is beyond that now. Always bright—chirrupy, one might almost say—she lives in an impersonal past. Her talk is all of the world's happenings in the days of her youth, 'when we had none of your gimcrack trains and things, my dear.' Sometimes she will mix up remembered tales of her grandmother's youth with the incidents of her own, much to the confusion of the listener. But gentle expostulation only makes Granny smile and sagely wag her head. A lovable old woman, on whom youth can look with hope and joy, for is she not a standing optimistic reminder, worn and weather-beaten, yet cheerful and almost blithe, of the strength of humanity?

After visiting the 'infirm ward' I always left the workhouse, for I could carry away a cheerful recollection and the hope that as the 'able-bodied' crossed the corridor to the land of their desires, so some of the 'aged' would migrate to the 'infirm ward,' and in its warm comfort be able, like Granny, to forget the persistent present and look forward to a hopeful future or back on a pleasant past.

FROM A COLLEGE WINDOW.

II.

THE sun flares red behind leafless elms and battlemented towers as I come in from a lonely walk beside the river; above the chimney-tops hangs a thin veil of drifting smoke, blue in the golden light. The games in the Common are just coming to an end; a stream of long-coated spectators sets towards the town, mingled with the parti-coloured muddled figures of the players. I have been strolling half the afternoon along the river bank, watching the boats passing up and down; hearing the shrill cries of coxes, the measured plash of oars, the rhythmical rattle of rowlocks, intermingled at intervals with the harsh grinding of the chain-ferries. Five-and-twenty years ago I was rowing here myself in one of these boats, and I do not wish to renew the experience. I cannot conceive why and in what moment of feeble good-nature or misapplied patriotism I ever consented to lend a hand. I was not a good oar, and did not become a better one; I had no illusions about my performance, and any momentary complacency was generally sternly dispelled by the harsh criticism of the coach on the bank, when we rested for a moment to receive our meed of praise or blame. But though I have no sort of wish to repeat the process, to renew the slavery which I found frankly and consistently intolerable, I find myself looking on at the cheerful scene with an amusement in which mingles a shadow of pain, because I feel that I have parted with something, a certain buoyancy and elasticity of body, and perhaps spirit, of which I was not conscious at the time, but which I now realise that I must have possessed. It is with an admiration mingled with envy that I see these youthful, shapely figures, bare-necked and bare-kneed, swinging rhythmically past. I watch a brisk crew lift a boat out of the water by a boat-house; half of them duck underneath to get hold of the other side, and they march up the grating gravel in a solemn procession. I see a pair of cheerful young men, released from tubbing, execute a wild and inconsequent dance upon the water's edge; I see a solemn conference of deep import between a stroke and a coach. I see a neat, clean-limbed young man go airily up to a well-earned tea,

without, I hope, a care or an anxiety in his mind, expecting and intending to spend an agreeable evening. 'Oh, Jones of Trinity, oh, Smith of Queen's,' I think to myself, '*tua si bona nôris!* Make the best of the good time, my boy, before you go off to the office or the fourth-form room, or the country parish! Live virtuously, make honest friends, read the good old books, lay up a store of kindly recollections, of firelit rooms in venerable courts, of pleasant talks, of innocent festivities. Very fresh is the brisk morning air, very fragrant is the newly-lighted bird's-eye, very lively is the clink of knives and forks, very keen is the savour of the roast beef that floats up to the dark rafters of the College Hall. But the days are short and the terms are few; and do not forget to be a sensible as well as a good-humoured young man!'

Thackeray, in a delightful ballad, invites a pretty page to wait till he comes to forty years; well, I have waited—indeed, I have somewhat overshot the mark—and to-day the sight of all this brisk life, going on just as it used to do, with the same *insouciance* and the same merriment, makes me wish to reflect, to gather up the fragments, to see if it is all loss, all declension, or whether there is something left, some strength in what remains behind.

I have a theory that one ought to grow older in a tranquil and appropriate way, that one ought to be perfectly contented with one's time of life, that amusements and pursuits ought to alter naturally and easily, and not be regretfully abandoned. One ought not to be dragged protesting from the scene, catching desperately at every doorway and balustrade; one should walk off smiling. It is easier said than done. It is not a pleasant moment when a man first recognises that he is out of place in the football field, that he cannot stoop with the old agility to pick up a skimming stroke to cover-point, that dancing is rather too heating to be decorous, that he cannot walk all day without undue somnolence after dinner, or rush off after a heavy meal without indigestion. These are sad moments which we all of us reach, but which are better laughed over than fretted over. And a man who, out of sheer inability to part from boyhood, clings desperately and with apoplectic puffings to these things is an essentially grotesque figure. To listen to young men discussing one of these my belated contemporaries, and to hear one enforcing on another the amusement to be gained from watching the old buffer's manœuvres, is a lesson against undue youthfulness. One can indeed give amusement without loss of dignity by being open to being induced to join in such things occasionally

in an elderly way, without any attempt to disguise deficiencies. But that is the most that ought to be attempted. Perhaps the best way of all is to subside into the genial and interested looker-on, to be ready to applaud the game you cannot play, and to admire the dexterity you cannot rival.

What then, if any, are the gains that make up for the lack of youthful prowess? They are, I can contentedly say, many and great. In the first place, there is the loss of a quality which is productive of an extraordinary amount of pain among the young, the quality of self-consciousness. How often was one's peace of mind ruined by *gaucherie*, by shyness, by the painful consciousness of having nothing to say, and the still more painful consciousness of having said the wrong thing in the wrong way! Of course, it was all immensely exaggerated. If one went into chapel, for instance, with a straw hat, which one had forgotten to remove, over a surplice, one had the feeling for several days that it was written in letters of fire on every wall. I was myself an ardent conversationalist in early years, and, with the charming omniscience of youth, fancied that my opinion was far better worth having than the opinions of dons encrusted with pedantry and prejudice. But if I found myself in the society of these petrified persons, by the time that I had composed a suitable remark, the slender opening had already closed, and my contribution was either not uttered at all, or hopelessly belated in its appearance. Or some deep generalisation drawn from the dark backward of my vast experience would be produced, and either ruthlessly ignored or contemptuously corrected by some unsympathetic elder of unyielding voice and formed opinions. And then there was the crushing sense, at the conclusion of one of these interviews, of having been put down as a tiresome and heavy young man. I fully believed in my own liveliness and sprightliness, but it seemed an impossible task to persuade my elders that these qualities were there. A good-natured, elderly friend used at times to rally me upon my shyness, and say that it all came from thinking too much about myself. It was as useless as if one told a man with a toothache that it was mere self-absorption that made him suffer. For I have no doubt that the disease of self-consciousness is incident to intelligent youth. Marie Bashkirtseff, in the terrible self-revealing journals which she wrote, describes a visit that she paid to someone who had expressed an interest in her and a desire to see her. She says that as she passed the threshold of the room she breathed a prayer,

'O God, make me worth seeing!' How often used one to desire to make an impression, to make oneself felt and appreciated!

Well, all that uneasy craving has left me. I no longer have any particular desire for or expectation of being impressive. One likes, of course, to feel brisk and lively; but whereas in the old days I used to enter a circle with the intention of endeavouring to be felt, of giving pleasure and interest, I now go in the humble hope of receiving either. The result is that, having got rid to a great extent of this pompous and self-regarding attitude of mind, I not only find myself more at ease, but I also find other people infinitely more interesting. Instead of laying one's frigate alongside of another craft with the intention of conducting a boarding expedition, one pays a genial visit by means of the longboat with all the circumstances of courtesy and amiability. Instead of desiring to make conquests, I am glad enough to be tolerated. I dare, too, to say what I think, not alert for any symptoms of contradiction, but fully aware that my own point of view is but one of many, and quite prepared to revise it. In the old days I demanded agreement; I am now amused by divergence. In the old days I desired to convince; I am now only too thankful to be convinced of error and ignorance. I now no longer shrink from saying that I know nothing of a subject; in old days I used to make a pretence of omniscience, and had to submit irritably to being tamely unmasked. It seems to me that I must have been an unpleasant young man enough, but I humbly hope that I was not so disagreeable as might appear.

Another privilege of advancing years is the decreasing tyranny of convention. I used to desire to do the right thing, to know the right people, to play the right games. I did not reflect whether it was worth the sacrifice of personal interest; it was all-important to be in the swim. Very gradually I discovered that other people troubled their heads very little about what one did; that the right people were often the most tiresome and the most conventional, and that the only games which were worth playing were the games which one enjoyed. I used to undergo miseries in staying at uncongenial houses, in accepting shooting invitations when I could not shoot, in going to dances because the people whom I knew were going. Of course one has plenty of disagreeable duties to perform in any case; but I discovered gradually that to adopt the principle of doing disagreeable things which were supposed to be amusing and agreeable was to misunderstand the whole situation.

Now, if I am asked to stay at a tiresome house, I refuse ; I decline invitations to garden parties and public dinners and dances, because I know that they will bore me ; and as to games, I never play them if I can help, because I find that they do not entertain me. Of course there are occasions when one is wanted to fill a gap, and then it is the duty of a Christian and a gentleman to conform, and to do it with a good grace. Again, I am not at the mercy of small prejudices, as I used to be. As a young man, if I disliked the cut of a person's whiskers or the fashion of his clothes, if I considered his manner to be abrupt or unpleasing, if I was not interested in his subjects, I set him down as an impossible person, and made no further attempt to form acquaintance.

Now I know that these are superficial things, and that a kind heart and an interesting personality are not inconsistent with boots of a grotesque shape and even with mutton-chop whiskers. In fact, I think that small oddities and differences have grown to have a distinct value and form a pleasing variety. If a person's manner is unattractive, I often find that it is nothing more than a shyness or an awkwardness which disappears the moment that familiarity is established. My standard is, in fact, lower, and I am more tolerant. I am not, I confess, wholly tolerant, but my intolerance is reserved for qualities and not for externals. I still fly swiftly from long-winded, pompous, and contemptuous persons ; but if their company is unavoidable, I have at least learnt to hold my tongue. The other day I was at a country-house where an old and extremely tiresome General laid down the law on the subject of the Mutiny, where he had fought as a youthful subaltern. I was pretty sure that he was making the most grotesque misstatements, but I was not in a position to contradict them. Next the General was a courteous, weary old gentleman, who sate with his finger-tips pressed together, smiling and nodding at intervals. Half an hour later we were lighting our candles. The General strode fiercely up to bed, leaving a company of yawning and dispirited men behind. The old gentleman came up to me and, as he took a light, said with an inclination of his head in the direction of the parting figure, 'The poor General is a good deal misinformed. I didn't choose to say anything, but I know something about the subject, because I was private secretary to the Secretary for War.'

That was the right attitude, I thought, for the gentlemanly philosopher ; and I have learnt from my old friend the lesson not to choose to say anything if a turbulent and pompous person

lays down the law on subjects with which I happen to be acquainted.

Again, there is another gain that results from advancing years. I think it is true that there were sharper ecstasies in youth, keener perceptions, more passionate thrills ; but then the mind also dipped more swiftly and helplessly into discouragement, dreariness, and despair. I do not think that life is so rapturous, but it certainly is vastly more interesting. When I was young there were an abundance of things about which I did not care. I was all for poetry and art ; I found history tedious, science tiresome, politics insupportable. Now I may thankfully say it is wholly different. The time of youth was the opening to me of many doors of life. Sometimes a door opened upon a mysterious and wonderful place, an enchanted forest, a solemn avenue, a sleeping glade ; often, too, it opened into some dusty work-a-day place, full of busy forms bent over intolerable tasks, whizzing wheels, dark gleaming machinery, the din of the factory and the workshop. Sometimes, too, a door would open into a bare and melancholy place, a hillside strewn with stones, an interminable plain of sand ; worst of all, a place would sometimes be revealed which was full of suffering, anguish, and hopeless woe, shadowed with fears and sins. From such prospects I turned with groans unutterable ; but the air of the accursed place would hang about me for days. These surprises, these strange surmises crowded in fast upon me. How different the world was from what the careless forecast of boyhood had pictured it ! How strange, how beautiful, and yet how terrible ! As life went on the beauty increased, and a calmer, quieter beauty made itself revealed ; in youth I looked for strange, impressive, haunted beauties, things that might deeply stir and move ; but year by year a simpler, sweeter, healthier kind of beauty made itself felt ; such beauty as lies on the bare, lightly washed, faintly tinted hillside of winter, all delicate greens and browns, so far removed from the rich summer luxuriance, and yet so austere, so pure. I grew to love different books too. In youth one demanded a generous glow, a fire of passion, a richly tinged current of emotion ; but by degrees came the love of sober, subdued reflection, a cooler world in which, if one could not rest, one might at least travel equably and gladly, with a far wider range of experience, a larger, if a fainter, hope. I grew to demand less of the world, less of Nature, less of people ; and behold, a whole range of subtler and gentler emotions came into sight, like the blue hills of the distance, pure and low. The whole

movement of the world, past and present, became intelligible and dear. I saw the humanity that lies behind political and constitutional questions, the strong, simple forces that move like a steady stream behind the froth and foam of personality. If in youth I believed that personality and influence could sway and mould the world, in later years I have come to see that the strongest and fiercest characters are only the river-wrack, the broken boughs, the torn grasses that whirl and spin in the tongue of the creeping flood, and that there is a dim resistless force behind them that marches on unheeding and drives them in the forefront of the inundation. Things that had seemed drearily theoretical, dry, axiomatic, platitudinal, showed themselves to be great generalisations from a torrent of human effort and mortal endeavour. And thus all the mass of detail and human relation that had been rudely set aside by the insolent prejudices of youth under the generic name of business, came slowly to have an intense and living significance. I cannot trace the process in detail; but I became aware of the fulness, the energy, the matchless interest of the world, and the vitality of a hundred thoughts that had seemed to me the dreariest abstractions.

Then, too, the greatest gain of all, there comes a sort of patience. In youth mistakes seemed irreparable, calamities intolerable, ambitions realisable, disappointments unbearable. An anxiety hung like a dark impenetrable cloud, a disappointment poisoned the springs of life. But now I have learned that mistakes can often be set right, that anxieties fade, that calamities have sometimes a compensating joy, that an ambition realised is not always pleasurable, that a disappointment is often of itself a rich incentive to try again. One learns to look over troubles, instead of looking into them; one learns that hope is more unconquerable than grief. And so there flows into the gap the certainty that one can make more of misadventures, of unpromising people, of painful experiences than one had ever hoped. It may not be, nay, it is not so eager, so full-blooded a spirit; but it is a serener, a more interesting, a happier outlook.

And so, like Robinson Crusoe on his island, striking a balance of my advantages and disadvantages, I am inclined to think that the good points predominate. Of course there still remains the intensely human instinct, which survives all the lectures of moralists, the desire to eat one's cake and also to have it. One wants to keep the gains of middle life and not to part with the glow of youth.

'The tragedy of growing old,' says a brilliant writer, 'is the remaining young;' that is to say, that the spirit does not age as fast as the body. The sorrows of life lie in the imagination, in the power to recall the good days that have been and the old sprightly feelings; and in the power, too, to forecast the slow overshadowing and decay of age. But Lord Beaconsfield once said that the worst evil one has to endure is the anticipation of the calamities that do not happen; and I am sure that the thing to aim at is to live as far as possible in the day and for the day. I do not mean in an epicurean fashion, by taking prodigally all the pleasure that one can get, like a spendthrift of the happiness that is meant to last a lifetime, but in the spirit of Newman's hymn:

I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Even now I find that I am gaining a certain power, instinctively, I suppose, in making the most of the day and hour. In old days, if I had a disagreeable engagement ahead of me, something to which I looked forward with anxiety or dislike, I used to find that it poisoned my cup. Now it is beginning to be the other way; and I find myself with a heightened sense of pleasure in the quiet and peaceful days that have to intervene before the fateful morning dawns. I used to awake in the morning on the days that were still my own before the day which I dreaded, and begin, in that agitated mood which used to accompany the return of consciousness after sleep, when the mind is alert but unbalanced, to anticipate the thing I feared, and feel that I could not face it. Now I tend to awake and say to myself, 'Well, at any rate I have still to-day in my own hands;' and then the very day itself has a heightened value from the feeling that the uncomfortable experience lies ahead. I suppose that is the secret of the placid enjoyment which the very old so often display. They seem so near the dark gate, and yet so entirely indifferent to the thought of it; so absorbed in little leisurely trifles, happy with a childlike happiness.

And thus I went slowly back to College in that gathering gloom that seldom fails to bring a certain peace to the mind. The porter sate, with his feet on the fender, in his comfortable den, reading a paper. The lights were beginning to appear in the court, and the firelight flickered briskly upon walls hung with all the pleasant signs of youthful life, the groups, the family photographs, the suspended oar, the cap of glory. So when I entered my book-lined

rooms, and heard the kettle sing its comfortable song on the hearth, and reflected that I had a few letters to write, an interesting book to turn over, a pleasant Hall dinner to look forward to, and that, after a space of talk, an undergraduate or two were coming to talk over a leisurely piece of work, an essay or a translation, I was more than ever inclined to acquiesce in my disabilities, to purr like an elderly cat, and to feel that while I had the priceless boon of leisure, set in a framework of small duties, there was much to be said for life, and that I was a poor creature if I could not be soberly content.

Of course I know that I have missed the nearer ties of life, the hearth, the home, the companionship of a wife, the joys and interests of growing girls and boys. But if a man is fatherly and kind-hearted, he will find plenty of young men who are responsive to a paternal interest, and intensely grateful for the good-humoured care of one who will listen to their troubles, their difficulties, and their dreams. I have two or three young friends who tell me what they are doing, and what they hope to do ; I have many correspondents who were friends of mine as boys, who tell me from time to time how it goes with them in the bigger world, and who like in return to hear something of my own doings.

And so I sit, while the clock on the mantelpiece ticks out the pleasant minutes, and the fire winks and crumbles on the hearth, till the old gyp comes tapping at the door to learn my intentions for the evening ; and then, again, I pass out into the court, the lighted windows of the Hall gleam with the ancient armorial glass, from staircase after staircase come troops of alert gowned figures, while overhead, above all the pleasant stir and murmur of life, hang in the dark sky the unchanging stars.

THE KING'S REVOKE.

BY MRS. MARGARET L. WOODS.

CHAPTER XII.

THE late M. Périgaux, banker and father of Madame Gérard, had been, not only a man of business, but a man of taste. 'Mon Repos,' his villa on the heights of St. Symphorien, bore witness to that. It was built in the traditional style of Touraine, its white walls surmounted by a high slate roof with conical towerlets and tall dormer windows; but a frieze in low relief and the delicate mouldings round the lower windows and the doors were in the manner of the happiest moment of Louis XVI. A moment of cultured taste, of philosophic enlightenment, the white dawn of a roaring blood-red day. This had been the period of Madame Gérard's early youth, and through the violently shifted scenes of the last quarter of a century she remained true to the faith in which she had been reared—a philosophic democracy, a severe republicanism. Moreover, her opinions were expressed with a frankness and frequency which would have had serious consequences in Paris, and even in Tours kept her family and friends in a simmer of agitation. But if the fashion of her mind remained unchanged, the fashion of her clothes was always of the latest Parisian, and made her the envy and admiration of half the ladies in Touraine. Her style of beauty, inherited from a Provençal mother, enabled her to wear to advantage the short-waisted and scanty garments of the day, which made exorbitant demands on the average female form. Madame Gérard, although on her way to be stout, had not yet passed the stage of opulence, and she had the fine massive throat and head not infrequently seen in Provence. Her black hair was bound with fillets, and as she half reclined on a severely classical couch in her low-cut purple silk gown she resembled a matron of the Roman Empire rather than the Napoleonic. Caroline, although a pretty young person enough, was by no means so handsome as her mother. This and the amount of her dowry, she would say with a laugh, had threatened

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to be the only two facts ever mentioned about her, and must have been in her epitaph had she not averted the danger by making herself a shocking example to every other young lady in the neighbourhood. Not, indeed, that there was anything really remarkable in her conduct or manners ; but she was natural, she was frank, she was witty, when to be affectedly modest and pretentiously inane was considered the only possible manner for a well-brought-up girl.

The mother and daughter had dined and were taking coffee on the terrace outside the drawing-room window. It was a long terrace, with a low grey wall which, on the other side, was not low, plunging down into a walled garden which bordered the high road. Away over the garden it looked towards the broad Loire and the distant town of Tours. On a level with the house the terrace bounded another garden, where clipped alleys of flowering chestnut surrounded a wild luxuriance of bloom ; for the fruit trees, the Judas trees, and the lilacs were in flower together, and underneath them the purple irises and pink pæonies, the wall-flowers, the whole flowery host of May, made a riot of colour and scent.

The mother had been laughing often as Caroline talked, but she had suddenly grown very serious.

‘Does that mean, my dear child,’ she asked, ‘that you are beginning to look on your cousin as a possible husband?’

Caroline considered the point of her foot.

‘There are practical reasons why I should do so ; are there not, mamma?’

‘Certainly, my child.’

‘My uncle would be very pleased ; and you, mamma—you would be enchanted, would you not?’

Madame Gérard, whose countenance expressed restrained but acute amazement and disgust, replied with decency :

‘Enchanted ? Naturally. Enchanted, Caroline.’

Caroline raised her head and showed her sparkling eyes, her dimples, and white teeth.

‘Oh, mamma !’ she cried, ‘what a dreadful story !’

She sprang up, shook her mother a little, and kissed her.

‘You must not tell stories, you do it so badly. Frankly, you would be in despair if I married Aristide. Don’t be afraid. I shan’t. There !’

She threw herself into her chair again.

'But really, my darling,' returned Madame Gérard, fingering her hair, which Caroline had disarranged, 'you are very ill behaved. For family reasons I, of course, wish you to marry your cousin. But as you have quite decided against Aristide I may as well say I detest him.'

'So now we have done with marriage and can talk of something less tiresome.'

'No, my child. Aristide is not the only suitor.'

'Let them wait.'

'They have already waited. I have said I would not marry you till you were twenty. Everyone thinks that ridiculous enough. You will soon be twenty, and we must really consider someone. M. Lefèvre has been waiting two years. He is an excellent fellow, well-bred, intelligent, with a good fortune, and I should be sorry to disappoint him.'

'You need not, mamma.'

'Ah, I'm glad! You mean you will marry him?'

'Not at all. I mean you can marry him yourself.'

'Caroline!'

'He is too old for me; and, besides, he has all the virtues. I only want some.'

'You are insupportable! My child, we must really be serious. I cannot imagine what makes you so different from other girls.'

'You are not exactly like other women, are you, mamma? Then, other things, too, perhaps—'

There was an alert masculine step on the threshold of the window, and there came quickly over it a masculine figure wearing a dark-blue coat manifestly old and a collar byronically careless. Charlesworth stood behind Madame Gérard, looking as one at home and glad to find himself there. She turned round.

'Is it you, Charles? Why did you not come to dinner?'

She held out her hand, and he kissed it with grace.

'I could not. I had pupils.'

'Pupils! You always have pupils when I want you.'

Charlesworth smiled a somewhat crooked smile.

'As I have often told you before, I have got to earn my living.'

Madame Gérard's royal manner reduced most men to cringing politeness, and accordingly the blunt candour with which Charlesworth was apt to brush aside her censures or commands was most pleasurable to her.

'Sit down, and Caroline will give you some coffee.'

'What a blessing you are come!' said Caroline, pouring out the coffee.

Insensibly he smiled, a little pleased at her words; but she continued: 'Mamma was going to scold me. She can't do it now you are here.'

'On the contrary, Mademoiselle, now Charles is here he will help me to make you reasonable. His opinion, at any rate, you respect.'

'Always—when it happens to be the same as my own.'

And Caroline's eyes met Charlesworth's sparkingly.

'I am prepared to be both judge and jury,' said Charlesworth, straightening himself. 'Set forth the case, ladies.'

'Caroline is just going to be twenty——'

'Not till the fifth of October,' interrupted he.

'It is now only May.'

Caroline clapped her hands softly.

'In four months, then, to be exact, she will be twenty, and it is time that she chose a husband.'

Caroline's black lashes were veiling her eyes, and Madame Gérard was too hot on the scent of her own ideas to observe any change in Charlesworth's countenance. In a moment there was nothing there to observe. He was perhaps a shade paler than usual, but then he was naturally pale.

'It is different in England, they tell me,' Madame Gérard continued. 'But with us a girl begins to be an old maid if she is not married at that age.'

'I want to be an old maid.'

Caroline's teasing gaiety was all gone, and she spoke with suppressed vehemence.

'Want to be an old maid!' cried her mother indignantly. 'You don't know what you're talking about, my dear child. A woman who is neither a wife nor a mother is a nullity; there is no reason for her existence. It would break my heart. But the thing is too absurd to discuss. I appeal to you, Charles. Is it possible for a girl like Caroline, neither deformed nor imbecile, and with such a dowry as she has, to remain unmarried?'

'It is not possible, Madame. And since the thing has got to be done, the sooner Mademoiselle Caroline does it the better.'

The girl was tormenting an end of the long green ribbon she wore round her waist.

'You hear that, Caroline? Charles is quite right.'

'But I don't like the husbands you have proposed, mamma,' she gasped piteously.

'Nonsense! You find objections to everyone. But admitting that your cousin is insupportable, and M. Lefèvre a little old, I have another suitor, quite a new one, to add to your list—M. de Neuville. We met him in Paris, Charles, and he was evidently very much taken with this bad girl, who, for her part, smiled upon him.'

'Neuville? I—I never heard of him.'

'Caroline has not spoken of him. Come now that's a good sign. He is young, charming, clever, well-conducted; and I know that the only reason he has not formally proposed is that he has no fortune.'

'Precisely,' her daughter broke in. 'M. de Neuville has not a penny.'

'You astonish me, Caroline. I did not know you were mercenary.'

'And I did not know, mamma, you would want me to do anything so vulgar, so ordinary, as to gild the blazon of a ruined aristocrat.'

Madame Gérard sat up, and her colour heightened.

'I, Caroline? You accuse me of such vulgar social ambition—me whose opinions and conduct you know so well?'

The red herring skilfully drawn by Caroline across the trail of the marriage question had a complete temporary success. Madame Gérard began to recite her social and political creed with a great deal of emphasis. She had not nearly finished when a manservant came out and announced that a M. Bernstein, sent by M. Gérard, was waiting to see her. The muse of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity gave place at once to the woman of business.

'I can see the man here on the terrace,' she said. 'You can go away as far as the chestnut alley until I call you, my children. I have something to discuss with him, and afterwards we will look at his diamonds. I shall perhaps choose some as a wedding present for Caroline. I rely on you, Charles, to bring her to reason on the subject of this marriage.'

The dealer in diamonds and *articles de vertu* came on to the terrace, his rough beaver hat in his hand, bowing, but not too much—a large man, somewhat stout, slow-footed, and the very model of a sober merchant.

Charlesworth and Caroline sauntered just out of earshot; but at first they said nothing to each other. The low sun threw their shadows a long way from them on to the grass of the *jardin anglais* below. Broad shade lay athwart the kitchen garden, where in neat sloping rows the lush vegetables, green, and red, and purple, were pushing up from the rich, well-tended earth. The apple-trees, pears, and cherries were all in blossom together, and a wealth of lilacs, mauve and white, and wine-coloured. On either side of the garden was a sloping mass of trees, incredibly green, where spires of chestnut bloom showed waxy white, and here and there a cedar or a pine towered among them in velvet darkness, sombrely aloof from the rapture and glory of spring. The broad Loire ran a river of light among its islands; beyond it lay the quays of Tours, a range of white Palladian fronts, then the crowding mediæval towers and slated roofs of the town. From deep groves all about them came the thronging trills and broken flutings of birds taking a brief farewell, reluctant yet joyous, of the day. Amid this orchestral tumult of voices from time to time the nightingale struck a richer, graver note.

Caroline paused at the entrance to the chestnut alley and leaned on the parapet. Charlesworth stood before her. He was pale, with a clear pallor as of a triumphant lover rather than as one who had but a moment since taken in his heart a blow not the less mortal because long expected. His eyes were bright, and a smile hovered round his refined and mobile mouth. He was saying to himself, 'I knew it must come. I will take it like a man. After all, she does not love anyone else.'

'So you won the race,' said Caroline.

She spoke in English, for Charlesworth had been her English master as well as tutor to her brothers.

'Yes; one must win something, you know.'

'And you won also the favour of a certain lady.'

He tossed his head slightly as though throwing from him an importunate recollection.

'I hope not. But come, Caroline, it's such a perfect evening, do let us talk of something nice.'

Caroline looked down, and her eyes fell on the kitchen garden.

'Strawberries are nice,' she said; 'shall we talk of strawberries?'

'Teasing girl! There are none to talk about; besides they are not nearly so nice as books. Brenton has lent me a novel

called "Ivanhoe." It's about Richard Cœur de Lion, and tournaments, and hermits, and outlaws; in short, it's the finest thing you ever read. I'm sure you should be allowed to read it.'

'Perhaps I shall, because it is English. But I shall never love any other novel as I love "Corinne."'

'Nonsense! "Corinne's" pretty enough, but this—oh! it's the finest book in the world.'

'There is no finest book in the world—no book which is finest to everyone. How can I say it? There are books we admire a great deal and we also understand. Then there is some other book we admire perhaps a little bit less; but we not only understand it, the book also understands us. For us, then, that is the finest book in the world.'

'I see what you mean; but you must read "Ivanhoe."'

'There is fighting in this book?'

'Plenty of fighting——'

'Mamma and I hate fighting. I suppose you are interested in it because you are a man.'

'But there's a glorious woman in "Ivanhoe." A Jewess who tries to jump out of the window when they put her in prison, and the villain makes love to her.'

'I like that well; although myself I would like better to strangle him.'

'She couldn't. You couldn't with those little hands. Unfortunately she was in love with the hero, a poor stick of a fellow. But then Oswald's a wretched creature; Corinne deserved to be unhappy for falling in love with Oswald.'

'No—no—no! I tell you Corinne is a great friend, a great, great friend of mine. And I have seen Oswald also.'

That byronic milord of Madame de Staël's had, strangely enough, appeared to Caroline in the guise of a threadbare scholar and amateur jockey. 'What I do not like is that when Oswald went back to England he loved no more the poor Corinne.'

'Perhaps I forget the story, but I don't think he ceased to love her, only he had the sense to see that it was not written they two should marry and live happy ever after. Corinne would have been wretched in England, and it was impossible for Oswald to abandon his country and his duties there.'

'Love is like the Emperor. "Impossible" is not in his dictionary. When a man reasons coldly like that it is that he does not love.'

Charlesworth began to utter, and stopped abruptly. He leaned

his elbow on the parapet and ran his hand through his hair with a familiar gesture, concealing his face.

There was a minute's silence, except for the fluting and crying of birds and the distant brazen clangour of a band on the quays, where the May fair was beginning to be animated. A white cloud floated above the town, flat beneath as a ship's keel, rounded above like the shining crowded sails of a whole armada. Below, against a belt of pale-blue sky, the slated towerlets and ancient roofs of the city, the high nave and fretted pinnacles of the cathedral, the dome of Charlemagne, and the tall tower of ruined St. Martin's stood out clear as a monk might have painted them in a king's missal. Above the pale arcade of the bridge a bouquet of tall trees on the Ile Ancard waved delicate sprays of golden green above the full-rounded verdure of the willows and brushwood beneath. Just below where they stood the gardeners' huts of the Ile Simon showed their little red roofs among a mass of greenery, all various and all brilliant as coloured flames. Here and there the deep-blushing Judas trees thrust up their blossoms, and everywhere was powdered the white chestnut bloom.

Charlesworth looked at the cloud.

'I never saw the air so clear,' he said. 'Do you think it can be going to rain?'

'I do not know. I will, at any rate, fetch my can and water my little plants under the house there. They grow very dry.'

'I see your can. I will fetch it for you.'

'No, no! I go myself.'

The watering-can stood a few yards beyond the corner of the house beside the stone basin of a small fountain from which the gardener had filled it. And as each meant to get it before the other, when they reached the fountain they were running and laughing as they ran like children. Charlesworth was first, and pounced on the can; but he had hardly snatched it before Caroline took hold of the other side, and a splash of sparkling water was over her skirt and the end of her green waist-ribbon.

'Oh, oh! Naughty!' she cried.

And Charlesworth had dropped the can, whipped out a large pocket-handkerchief, and was on his knees wiping the frock and the ribbon, quite grave and concerned.

Long, long years after, when weightier things had passed into the penumbra of memory to both of them, that trivial moment stood out clear and brilliant as though it had been yesterday.

Just that slanting sunbeam on the clump of lush lilac and the pink pæony bush, just that fleeting light and bloom of one fleeting moment, a bent dark head, a bit of muslin, and a length of ribbon, were destined to as much of immortality as mortal memory can bestow.

But they might not linger. Singular as was the liberty Madame Gérard allowed her daughter, for a girl to spend a few minutes with a man uninvigilated by the maternal eye, was a breach of an eleventh commandment which even she would hardly tolerate. Yet the glory of the moment was about them still as they bent over the flower border along the front of the house. They talked, but their words were less than nothing. Their voices were like the fluting of birds, but a part of the music of the spring.

Madame Gérard called from the other end of the terrace; her fan waved imperious. The dealer had brought out sundry packages, and she was examining unset diamonds with the eye of a connoisseur.

'I want you to see a clock,' she said to Charlesworth in English. 'Also I pray that Caroline may not clasp her hands and cry, "Mamma, I must have it!"'

Like most collectors, whatever their fortune, Madame Gérard loved a bargain. Charlesworth, falling down giddily from the heights of his heart, looked at the clock with a cold eye, which, however, gradually kindled with a certain interest. The face of the clock was within a lyre of gold and blue enamel; the strings of the lyre and a hoop of gold set with fine paste surrounding the face, formed the pendulum.

'It came from the Petit Trianon,' said the dealer. 'It was in the diamond room of Marie Antoinette.'

'Ah, the infamous Austrian!' cried Madame Gérard. 'Figure it to yourself! The people are dying of hunger while she builds herself walls of diamonds.'

There was a time when Charlesworth had endeavoured to loosen Madame Gérard's hold on the more absurd legends of her youth. Accordingly, in his presence, she grasped them with peculiar firmness.

'Walls of diamonds! A horror, indeed!' he observed drily. 'Yet Marie Antoinette is said to have had excellent taste.'

'I want you to look at these diamonds, Caroline,' said Madame Gérard. 'I am choosing the finest to make you a *parure* for your wedding day.'

Charlesworth was opening the question of the clock with Bernstein.

'It was bought together with other precious objects in the year 1803 by an English nobleman,' said Bernstein. 'He had friends in the Government who warned him to fly before the seizure of the English travellers, and he was obliged to leave his collection behind.'

Bernstein mentioned Lord Hove's name with emphasis.

'Ask him yourself, sir, if it is not true.'

Charlesworth shrugged his shoulders.

'How can I ask him? I had not his luck in 1803.'

'And the price of that clock?' said Madame Gérard.

Bernstein showed hesitation.

'At this moment, Madame, I am not free to sell it. It is not, in effect, mine. But under certain conditions, a little difficult to fulfil, I shall be able to sell this and several other beautiful things formerly belonging to Marie Antoinette—sell them at a bargain.'

'And the conditions?'

'I—Madame, I have been already too imprudent. The person to whom these things belong has—has sentiments towards the Bourbon family——'

Madame Gérard made an indignant noise.

'And I am a Republican. Everyone knows that! These objects may not come into my hands!'

'I do not say that, Madame. But may I trust you? You will not betray me or my employers?'

'I betray no one. But I shall not promise to protect Royalist intriguers.'

Bernstein proceeded calmly.

'Confiding, Madame, in your promise not to betray my secret, I will tell you why I am unable as yet to sell these things. Their possessor wishes them first to be offered, at a certain price of course, to one whom he styles the chief of the Bourbons now in France—the Prince of the Asturias.'

Madame Gérard laughed.

'To Prince Ferdinand? That will be a very useless homage.'

'You think, Madame, that the Prince will not buy them?'

'I am sure he will not. He has very little money and still less taste.'

Bernstein appeared annoyed.

'Then I shall have them on my hands for Heaven knows how long, since I hear it is extremely difficult to get the *entrée* to Valençay.'

'For the moment Talleyrand himself is there, and on Monday we are going to stay at a château in the neighbourhood. He is a collector, like myself, and if you will write direct to the Prince de Benevente—not to the Governor, you understand—I will tell him that you have some admirable things to dispose of, and under what conditions you are selling them.'

'Tell Talleyrand? Tell the Prince de Benevente? Madame! I implore you——'

'Don't be afraid. Talleyrand is a gentleman, he is not a police agent. He will be amused, as I am. But first let us talk about the price of the clock which I wish to buy—when Prince Ferdinand of course has looked at it and told us all how much rather he would have one with a bronze eagle on the top to remind him of our gracious Emperor.'

The bargaining began. Bernstein d'Haguerty made it serious enough to interest the lady, yet left the price both of the diamonds and the clock low enough to give her a sense of victory. But Charlesworth, who was wont to throw himself with energy into any business matter which concerned Madame Gérard, sat there almost silent and looking as though such a clock as that of the infamous Austrian could be bought any day in the Rue de Commerce.

A manservant was summoned to carry the parcels to M. Bernstein's carriage, and Madame Gérard turned to accompany him into the house and write a note to her brother-in-law, who had sent the dealer to her house. When Bernstein was out of earshot she paused and looked back.

'I do not know what is the matter with you, Charles, this evening; you are as mute as a fish. I hope it means you have used up your eloquence on Caroline with regard to her marriage.'

Charlesworth, the cool, the self-possessed, started, blushed, and stammered:

'Madame—I—I have said nothing—nothing on that subject.'

'Ah, *voilà*!' exclaimed the lady sharply, and went into the *salon*, where she was visible at the window: a sumptuous figure in purple silk and a white feather wrap, seated at her satin-wood writing-table. There was a pause. The young people sat facing

each other, and Charlesworth's head was bent. When he raised it his face was set severely, and he spoke in a voice which was almost harsh.

'Caroline,' he said in English, 'I have known you since you were a child, and I have done my best to console your mother for the son she has lost. Yet, after all, I am not your brother, and on a point so delicate as that of your marriage I can only say that you had better do what is always done in your country—that is, be guided by the advice of your elders.'

Caroline was pulling a posy to pieces.

'If I had done so I should have married my cousin Aristide. You think that would be pleasant for me?'

'Certainly not,' with emphasis.

'Or M. Lefèvre, who is good—so good—thirty-seven years, and a little fat!'

'Well, well! But this M. de Neuville now. What is he like?'

Caroline paused and sniffed at her mutilated posy before she answered:

'He is perhaps twenty-five years. He is what you call a charming boy, not quite handsome, but aristocrat, with such fine white hands——'

'Fine white hands! Like a woman.'

'No, not at all. He is serious, a philosopher. He was brought up in America and has the republican opinions. That is why mamma likes him; but I like him because he has a pretty voice and is musical.'

Charlesworth had almost exclaimed, 'I hate musical men!' but restrained himself.

'Then if you like him so much, Caroline,' he said in a level voice, 'pray marry him. Your mother will be pleased, you will be pleased, and the fellow himself will be as pleased as Punch no doubt.'

'I cannot marry him,' replied Caroline in a small voice.

'Why not?' sternly.

'Because I shall never love him.'

'Never's a long day. I don't pretend to understand the business, but I dare say you'll—you'll love him well enough when you're married to him.'

'No, no, no! I shall never love him.'

'You say that because you are a little girl, and don't know anything about love.'

'But I do.'

'Good Heavens!' he exclaimed. 'Impossible! Why, who could it be? You were not long in Paris; your mother never mentioned anyone else there, and here—I can't think of anyone you've met here—— Don't talk nonsense, Carrie!'

Caroline jumped up, scattering her flowers, clasped her hands and broke into a fit of nervous laughter. She went so quickly towards the house that she almost ran, and as she passed behind Charlesworth, 'Oh, stupid, stupid!' she cried to his back, between a laugh and a sob.

He turned momentarily, and saw her passing in at the window, her handkerchief pressed to her eyes.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHARLESWORTH sat on, motionless as a stone. He could not trust himself to move so much as an eyelid—dared hardly, indeed, think of what had happened. It was something exquisite, yet of the nature of a catastrophe—like an angelic visitation announcing death. As yet the glory of the angel was round about him.

Caroline, seated at the tall piano, was playing brilliantly when Madame Gérard came out again. She spoke on indifferent matters, and he answered mechanically. Twilight was falling, and the voices of the nightingales rose now alone from the depths of the blossoming groves like bubbling springs of joy, like sudden fountains of mysterious and sorrowful yearning. Then, from the room within, a deeper human note answered the nightingales—the cry of Orpheus to Eurydice, music uplifting simple words, such as any day may fall from any lips, and pouring through them all the else inexpressible passion of the human heart.

*Chè farò senza Eurydice,
Chè farò senza il mio ben?*

When that voice, at once of triumph and of lamentation, had breathed itself away into silence, Charlesworth rose abruptly, as one rising from a dream.

'Good-night,' he said to Madame Gérard; 'I will not disturb Caroline.'

He kissed her hand and went by a covered flight of steps into the garden below, and so by a path hidden among lilacs and chest-

nuts, to the gate in the wall which led on to the white road beside the Loire. It is an old suburban road, having no reminiscence of the country, but edged by time-worn walls of villa gardens and low walls and high, grey roofs of old-world houses. Yet it stretched vacant in the twilight save for a belated family party, hastening away towards the fair whose red lights began to wink along the distant lines of the quays.

Charlesworth leaned against a low wall above the river bank and looked up at the familiar house on the height. In that house he had been received, first hospitably as a young and passionate pilgrim to the Land of Liberty, then with protecting warmth as a captive treacherously snared in that very land. In return he had undermined the happiness of his benefactress through the heart of her daughter. He knew Caroline, her masculine determination, her girlish recklessness of consequence ; and to-night he knew his own heart also, how ready, how certain, to play his honour false. His life, he thought, was of such a frustrate kind as it would be contemptible in him to value highly. A man without fortune or connections, he was yet one of those whose success Nature herself seems to have assured ; and through the years of his boyhood and early manhood she had kept her promise. He had been very successful, very ambitious, very sure of himself, a little contemptuous of others. And this was the end. At thirty he was a half-starved teacher, sometimes of English, sometimes of the classics, in a French provincial town. Nor was there any reasonable prospect of a change in his condition while yet there was time to redeem the wasted years. Already, before to-night, Hamlet's question was a familiar one in his soul's debate.

He looked at his watch. In less than an hour play would begin at the English Club. Featherstone would be there, never in temper since the loss of his thirty napoleons, and waiting a promised revenge. He might get one that would surprise him. If a gamester loses more than he can pay he has an open reason for blowing his brains out, and no woman need suppose herself smirched with his blood. The shock to Caroline would doubtless be great, but she was young and healthy ; she would get over it and marry the man chosen by her family. For himself, to leave her thus, without expression, without explanation, would be bitter indeed. ' But in the grave there is no remembrance.'

Or, again, if the verdict of the cards were favourable, a desperate man with a hundred napoleons in his pocket might somehow

loosen the teeth even of this great trap, and so win out. Let the cards decide.

He was in the mood when the waking mind annihilates Time as effectually as does his who sleeps and dreams. But when he returned to the every-day world the young moon had brightened in the violet west, and white points of light had crowded one by one into the dim azure overhead. Unseeing and unseen of him Caroline stood on the high terrace, and her dreams were other than his.

'Come in, my child!' cried Madame Gérard from the *salon*. 'Do you want to catch a dreadful cold?'

Caroline came in obediently. She let the servant close the windows, but would not permit the curtains to be drawn. Wax candles were lighted—Madame Gérard loved light—in sconces and girandoles, and their unveiled brightness streamed out upon the dark. Charlesworth, as he turned to look once more on Caroline's home, saw it thus, beaconing from the height.

'Why did Charles go away like that, mamma?' asked Caroline.

'I don't know. He is never well in the spring. I told him to be sure and take some of Dr. Gobert's bark and steel mixture, but I suppose he will not do so.'

Madame Gérard was writing again at the satin-wood table.

'I wish you would sit down, Caroline, instead of wandering about like a troubled spirit,' she said impatiently.

'That is just what I am, mamma—a troubled spirit.'

Madame Gérard looked up and saw her girl was pale.

'You are worried about your marriage, my child?'

'Yes, very much worried.'

Madame Gérard's heart relented, but her reason bade her be firm. She stood up and sealed a letter very neatly with violet sealing-wax and a cornelian seal.

'I thought you had more good sense. You expect in marriage things you have no right to expect. Do you suppose I was in love with your father? Never! Yet we made an excellent *ménage*.'

After her mother had finished sealing the letter, and had seated herself expectant, Caroline stopped in her pacing.

'Were you not unhappy, then, when you had to marry papa?'

'Unhappy? Certainly not. I was enchanted at being married, as a young girl ought to be.'

Caroline trembled, but she went on:

'Then, I suppose, you did not love someone else when you married papa?'

'What an idea! How could I? I was a young girl. Of course I could not love anyone else.'

'But if you had loved another, mamma, would it not have been a sin for you to marry papa?'

'What is the use of talking such nonsense, Caroline? *Mon Dieu!* No, you cannot have the face—tell me at once what you mean.'

Madame Gérard spoke in a *crescendo*, and grasped her fan almost menacingly.

Caroline pressed her clasped hands against her bosom that was shaken with the beating of her heart.

'Yes, it is true. I love someone I cannot marry. I cannot help it.'

'You love someone!' cried Madame Gérard in a loud and terrible voice. 'You, a young girl, you dare to tell me that, and you are not ashamed of it!'

Caroline did not answer, and she broke out again:

'What a generation! What times! Wretched girl! And you do not even blush for it? Tell me, I insist, the name of this someone you—think you love.'

'O mamma!' panted Caroline, 'you must know! Who could it be except—except one you yourself love as a son.'

'Charles!' shrieked Madame Gérard. 'No, it is impossible! Do not tell me it is Charles.'

Caroline collected herself. Her voice was low, but she spoke firmly. 'Yes, it is he. You have let me see him nearly every day since I was a little girl. Such as he is, how could I help loving him?'

'What treason! What an ungrateful wretch! After all I have done for him he has dared to make love to my daughter.'

'Never! Not a word—not even a look.'

'Then he does not love you—'

'He does love me. I know it.'

'You cannot know it, and I do not believe it.'

'I understand your not believing it, for I am not worthy of being loved by Erskine Charlesworth. All the same he loves me.'

She spoke calmly, in fact obstinately. Madame Gérard's voice rang through the room:

'Monstrous! Absurd! He dare not love you—an Englishman——'

'You said to-day, mamma, all men were equals, even negroes. Is an Englishman worse than a negro?'

'Be silent, Caroline; you are insolent.'

Madame Gérard paused, working up a storm of fury. But before it was consummated another storm burst on hers from without, a tempest of passion and tears. Caroline flung herself down, her face in her mother's lap, her arms round her mother's waist.

'Mamma, mamma, be kind to me. Think how I must suffer. I love him—I love him with all my heart, and I shall never be allowed to marry him. I adore him, and you want me to marry another.'

'My daughter, my poor daughter!' cried the agonised mother, 'what a misfortune!' And her tears also began to flow.

'Charles must go away at once,' she said presently, weeping for him, for Caroline, and herself.

'Do not send him away. You do not know Charles.'

'I—I do not know Charles!'

'He will kill himself.'

'My poor child, at any rate I know men. I assure you they do not kill themselves for these things.'

And at that moment Charlesworth stood in his own shabby room taking his pistols from their dusty hiding-place.

Madame Gérard's daughter was the apple of her eye. When Charlesworth had first known her she had had an eldest son, who, if not dearer, had by virtue of his sex held out to her a prospect of keener interest. He had embraced with ardour republican and democratic principles at a time when they were, if not wholly forgotten, much in the shade. Nevertheless, the conscription had called him to make one of the holocaust of the everlasting war. The Empire had also robbed her of her younger son, separating him from her, not by death, but by a difference of opinion which to her was hardly more tolerable. He had flung himself on the side of militarism with the same violence with which his mother espoused her own opinions; and to Madame Gérard the man who saw public affairs from a different angle to herself was necessarily a knave or a fool, or both.

Charlesworth, in spite of the great disillusionment brought by his luckless visit to France, still shared her general principles, although with a British and masculine temperance of mind. And

it was because he was an Englishman that she had admitted him to so intimate a place in her family ; for it was already understood that an Englishman's attitude towards women was different from that of Continental men ; and Madame Gérard's own intelligence had enabled her to apprehend that, beautiful though she still was, there was not a grain of gallantry in Charlesworth's friendship and admiration for her. But she had not realised that the particular tone of mind which made his relations to herself impeccably platonic would not prevent him falling in love with her daughter. And that Caroline, so sensible, so free from girlish follies, could commit the folly of falling in love with Charlesworth had never occurred to her as possible. Her own imprudence was manifest to her that night as she sat alone in her bedroom, her eyes absently fixed on the long mirror, which reflected a handsome woman becomingly draped in a white wrapper and crowned with long black hair. Her heart was full of grief and anxiety for her daughter, for Charlesworth, and for herself. She remembered her own youth, and how, like every mother since Eve, she had determined that her daughter's should be at once happier and more blameless. Now custom and feeling assured her that Caroline had been guilty of an outrage on the proprieties of which she herself would have been incapable. What, in comparison, were such obvious and platonic flirtations as that which had connected her name with Talleyrand's ? There had been one real lover, indeed, in her life, one real passion running its unnoticed course when all eyes were fixed on Madame la Guillotine, and gossips' tongues wagged only of her doings. It was she who had robbed Héloïse Gérard of her lover. And so strange and fevered a dream did that time of the Terror appear, so cut off from the normal order of the world, both before and after, that it was no wonder if that personal episode seemed to be cut off with the rest. But to-night the recollection of Caroline clinging round her waist, and crying out, ' I love him, I adore him ! ' recalled the image of another young woman, one dark night, dashing herself against the outer wall of a prison until her hands bled and her forehead was bruised. Madame Gérard's anger died away in sighs. Caroline, too, was dashing herself against a wall, of a nature immaterial, yet unbreachable. So at first it appeared ; but Madame Gérard's reverie was a long one, and it was not only the image of Love that the recollection of her youth brought before her ; it was also her youthful faiths and enthusiasms. At length she said to the woman in the glass :

'What then, Héloïse Gérard ? Thou also art become the slave and the tyrant of custom and superstition, ready to sacrifice the being dearest to thee on the altar of a prejudice. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity are to thee empty words, and the teachings of the immortal Jean-Jacques are forgotten. If Charles were a Frenchman, if he had fortune or position, wouldst thou not choose him before all others for Caroline ? In loving him she follows the dictates of Nature. He is virtuous, he is formed to make her an excellent husband, and thee also an excellent son. Let us shake off the yoke of prejudice ; let us follow the dictates of reason, and do all that is in our power to make two virtuous persons, who love each other, happy.'

CHAPTER XIV.

THE English Club at Tours prided itself on its respectability. Men such as Captain Brenton, the Bursar of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Mr. Chester played their quiet rubber of whist there evening after evening ; and if occasionally some young man, intolerably weary of this confined and dream-like existence, played higher than he could rightly afford to play, the stakes were still low. But since anxious and influential relations had procured the removal of the heir of Upperdale from profligate Verdun to respectable Tours, there had been an upward tendency in the young men's stakes, and games of a more gambling nature had made headway. The matter had been talked over by the elders of the club, whose annoyance was the greater because Erskine Charlesworth, a man who, in spite of poverty and comparative youth, had won himself a leading place in the English community, was among the offenders. He had won thirty napoleons from Featherstone the preceding week, and although to the heir of Upperdale such a sum was a trifle, to most of the young men in the club, certainly to Charlesworth, thirty napoleons represented much. To-night Featherstone had claimed his revenge, and it was admitted that Charlesworth could not be asked to deny it ; but afterwards steps must be taken to prevent the club being turned into a gambling establishment, like the one for the English at Verdun, so cynically smiled on by the French Government.

The club was established in a wing of the seventeenth-century house, the *Maison Prud'homme*, rented by the De Ferriets, and the

Baron de Ferriet had formerly acted to it in the capacity partly of landlord, partly of manager. But he was now seldom in Tours. The card-room was a large room on the first floor, having three high, heavily framed casement windows which looked on to the front courtyard of the house. The polished floor was bare, and it was furnished only with small baize-covered tables and bow-legged, fiddle-backed chairs. It was fairly full, although the evening was hot and so still that, although the window was wide open, the candles burnt quite steadily on the small table close to the central window at which Featherstone and Charlesworth were playing. At the whist-tables the silence of the room was broken at intervals between two deals, by a discussion of the cards and the play; but at that particular table not a word broke the silence except those necessary to the game. The whist-players looked that way inquiringly from time to time, Mr. Chester in particular. The stakes were not on the table, and he would have been glad to know what the scores they were marking represented. The two faces were very clearly seen, and he judged Featherstone to be losing by his expression. Charlesworth's was as close as a mask. Their profiles were visible enough, too, from the courtyard below.

Bernstein drove up to the high stone gateway which separated the courtyard from the street and descended from a hired coach, with a lumbering gait very different from that of Count d'Haguerty. While busying himself with paying the coachman and getting out his packages he overheard a conversation between the mild, yellow-faced Sam Venning and a man with the air of a footman rather than a groom, but dressed in something as much resembling an English groom's dress as could be procured in Tours.

'Blest if that ain't that beggarly Chawlesworth sittin' hup there playin' with my mawster as if he were a lord, and using the langwidge of sich, too.'

'I never 'eard Mr. Charlesworth use no langwidge,' returned Sam, in his slow way. 'E's like Captain Brenton, I expect, as don't 'old with hoaths.'

'I ain't complainin' of damns,' returned the groom. 'Livin' with gentlemen we gets used to 'em. But one day last week this 'ere Chawlesworth hacshally calls up my mawster, as 'awty as if 'e'd ha' been the Prince of Wales, and says to him: "Look heah, Featherstone, if I'm to ride your mare on Wednesday this fellow of yors must hobey my horders, d'ye see?" And my mawster

takin' it as meek as milk. I'd have given notice at onest if we'd ha' been at 'ome.'

Bernstein called Sam to help him carry his boxes upstairs, and, as they ascended the shallow steps to the door, he asked in English, with a foreign accent :

'Do ze young gentlemen at de club play high ?'

'Not before this Mr. Featherstone come,' returned Sam.

'Mr. Charlevort play wid him ?'

'Yes, sir. More's the pity ; a nice-spoken young gentleman, like him with more brains than money, to go playing with one as is just the hopposite.'

'But sometimes de brains dey get de money, hey Sam ?' suggested Bernstein.

'Nay, the devil's luck goes to his own, master.'

Bernstein opened the sitting-room door with a key which he carried in his pocket, and bade Sam set the boxes just within it. He then searched the inner bedrooms, but found no Patrick Dillon. The windows, which were on a level with those of the card-room, were open, and without kindling a light he posted himself at one commanding the window at which Featherstone and Charlesworth sat, and so near that in the stillness of the night their voices, and even their words, were audible when they spoke. D'Haguerty wished to observe Charlesworth, and, if the opportunity served, to draw him into the conspirators' apartments that very evening. The wing of the house dedicated to the club was ostensibly shut off from the central block since the Baron de Ferriet had left Tours ; but locked doors seldom proved barriers to D'Haguerty, and he had soon penetrated to and explored the wing. This not so much for a definite purpose as from a general dislike to inhabiting a house which held secrets for him.

Presently Patrick slipped in by the side door, still in his own clothes, a candle in his hand. The Count stepped up to him quickly and blew it out.

'Pardon ! But those club windows rake us.'

'Then why not—— ?' began Patrick.

'Man ! I want no questions, or I would be asking them myself. Look !'

The Count drew Patrick to the window.

'Well ?'

D'Haguerty continued low :

'You see the fellow here in the window, playing with his face

this way ? That's Charlesworth, our man. I want to get hold of him to-night.'

'And if he's lost money,' observed Patrick, 'he'll be the more glad to make our acquaintance.'

'But he hanged if I can tell whether he has or has not,' grumbled the Count.

Featherstone was marking his score.

'It stands four against three,' he said in a tone involuntarily exultant, for he had been losing earlier in the evening.

Charlesworth spoke.

'Yet at this rate you won't get your revenge before the club closes. Will you double the stakes ?'

The spectators at the neighbouring window did not hear what Charlesworth said ; but the suggestion and the assent to it caught the ear of Captain Brenton, who repeated it to the three men at his table, all members of the club committee.

The game in the window began to move more and more rapidly.

Featherstone held all the cards. The spectators in the other window noted tables getting empty and groups drifting towards Featherstone and Charlesworth to watch the game. The men were playing for sums that mattered—to one of them. From time to time, as Featherstone announced a king, or exultingly noted the score, d'Haguerty and Patrick gathered that the tide of luck was flowing strongly in his favour.

The Count put on a pair of light slippers and stole away in the direction of the wing.

The four whist-players at Captain Brenton's table finished their game at the usual hour, but they did not go home as usual.

They were all men with the habit of authority, and they consulted together quietly. They rose and saw a hand out at the *écarté* table. It did not last long. Again Featherstone won the vole. Charlesworth took the cards and began to shuffle.

The judge laid a hand on his shoulder.

'Don't you think the game has lasted long enough—even a little too long, Charlesworth ?' he asked in a low but significant voice. Charlesworth did not answer, but stared before him with an absent look, as though he had not heard, or were pondering the question.

Featherstone blustered :

'I suppose, sir, we are at liberty to play what game we please, and to play it as long as we please, without interference from other gentlemen ?'

'No, Mr. Featherstone,' interposed Captain Brenton, 'I don't

think you are. This club was founded by us English here for social purposes, not to be a gambling establishment.'

'We're proud to say,' said the Bursar, 'that when Bonaparte tried to start a gambling hell for us in Tours he failed. We don't intend to do it for him now.'

Featherstone laughed scornfully.

'Do you think you're going to keep a club for gentlemen like a damned girl school? Damme, while I'm here you can't do it. You don't seem to know who I am, sir. Split me if I ever heard gentlemen raise the devil over a wretched matter of a hundred napoleons.'

Mr. Chester, and, indeed, everyone else, knew Charlesworth's position.

'Good God! my dear fellow,' exclaimed the judge involuntarily, 'I couldn't have believed you could be such a fool.'

'Then, sir, I fear you did not know me,' replied Charlesworth.

He pushed back his chair and counted out fifty napoleons on the table, in notes and gold. Then he rose.

'Hello! You're not giving up?' asked Featherstone. 'Sit down and take your revenge, man.'

'I have already lost more than I can possibly pay,' returned Charlesworth coolly and in a clear voice.

There was a movement of painful surprise among the audience. Charlesworth was respected even where he was disliked. He walked slowly towards the door, and, having reached it, turned and faced the strained silence of the room with the far-away look still in his eyes, and hovering on his lips that engaging smile of his the secret of which must have lain in some mere accident of form, since in his mind there can have been no matter for mirth, nor in his heart for joy. Featherstone, having gaped his fill, broke into an unpleasant laugh, a triumphant laugh, since here was indeed his revenge.

'Can't pay your debts of honour? Hang it all, Charlesworth, I'll let you off—ought to have known better than to play with a wretched usher, by Gad!'

The look of abstraction fell from Charlesworth's face like a veil. He straightened himself and smiled again up the room, but this time haughtily, with a gleaming eye and with a look that passed right over Featherstone, as though he had been an empty chair.

'I think you all know,' he said, 'that, as things go in this town, it would take me years to pay off fifty napoleons, years of a life which is hardly worth living, is it? Well—there's another way of settling these matters, and that's the one I mean to take.'

Everyone was looking, listening, still silent and embarrassed.

'Good-night, gentlemen,' he said, his right hand in the bosom of his coat and bowing with an easy grace, learned perhaps at Valençay. As he lifted his head he suddenly whipped his hand out, and there was a pistol in it. Before a man in the room had so much as started to interfere he had clapped it to his head, pulled the trigger, and the sharp report rang out. But if no member of the club had been in a position to see the pistol before it was discharged, or near enough to catch the upraised hand before it was fired, another had been. He must have been just within the half-open door; how, and why there, no one in the confusion of the moment stayed to ask. Enough that, with an alertness astonishing in the heavy, elderly tradesman he appeared to be, he had knocked up the pistol in Charlesworth's hand, so that the bullet, which must otherwise have entered his brain, had passed up the forehead obliquely, making merely a surface wound. Throwing himself on the young man thus hastily, the big intruder had thrown him back against the wall, where he leaned, the blood running down his white face. Captain Brenton was the first to speak, approaching Charlesworth.

'Thank God, my poor fellow! Thank God for His mercy!'

Mr. Chester and the Bursar came up agitated, ejaculating. Featherstone still sat in his chair, staring fish-like. His red cheeks had turned dark purple, his large lower lip trembled so that he could hardly speak.

'Damn it, Charlesworth! Oh, damn it! I didn't know—damme if I did. I'll be hanged if I take anything but the thirty you won off me.'

But if Charlesworth heard voices they seemed to be speaking a hundred years away. Mr. Chester, a hand on his shoulder, led him into an adjoining bedroom.

Meantime d'Haguerty, having considered the situation, turned to Featherstone and said with his strongest foreign accent:

'You need not fear, sare, dat Mr. Charlevort not pay. You are all English here, and I tell you a secret. He has richer, better friends in de world dan he knows. Dey send him good news. I wait to see him about it.'

The ways in which money came over to the *détenus* were so various that there was nothing extraordinary in a travelling merchant being entrusted with it. That it should come to Charlesworth was the strange thing, who had hitherto lived entirely without subsidies.

Meantime in the empty bedroom, by the light of a tallow

candle, Mr. Chester was unskilfully binding a wet handkerchief round Charlesworth's head. When he had done the young man's head dropped between his hands. The judge comforted him paternally.

'Come, Charlesworth, be a man. We'll help you out of this.'

'You're very good, sir, but you can't. It's not the money that's the worst, it's this infernal life—and I thought it was all over.'

'Do you think any of us enjoy it, my poor boy? And you, after all, are young.'

'That's just it. You've had your career. I'm nearly thirty-one, and I haven't begun mine. I never shall now.'

'Never's a long day. Look at Jahleel Brenton. A fine naval career broken, and he takes it like a saint.'

'Because he is one. I'm not. To my thinking I've only got this one life, and see how I'm spending it. It's not worth going on, you know it's not, sir. Why couldn't that fool leave me alone?'

'Because I have good news for you, Monsieur,' said Bernstein in French. 'Excuse my entrance without ceremony, but it is better that you should know I bring you from friends at home money sufficient to pay your debt of honour.'

'Sir, that is impossible,' returned Charlesworth shortly.

'Nevertheless it is the truth, and you will understand the reason for it when you are sufficiently recovered to listen to me. Meantime allow me to show you a private way out of the house, whereby you may avoid a meeting with the members of your club, which might be disagreeable to you.'

Mr. Chester would have detained him, but for the moment Charlesworth preferred the society of any stranger to that of the kindest of friends. He declared himself to be perfectly recovered, his wound, a mere scratch, and followed d'Haguerty along the passage communicating with the main block of the house. The Count knocked in a peculiar manner at the door of his sitting-room, which was cautiously opened by Patrick.

'Here is a surgeon,' said d'Haguerty to Charlesworth in perfect English, 'who will, I think, dress that scratch of yours more cleverly than that elderly gentleman has done.'

'No surgeon,' replied Patrick, 'but one who has learned some necessary surgery on the battlefield.'

'You are a prisoner of war, sir?' inquired Charlesworth, anxious to speak of anything except the origin of his own wound, of which Patrick knew no more than the crack of a pistol could tell

him. 'If so you are by comparison enviable, for you may be exchanged. But no one troubles their heads about us obscure civilians. We may remain here till Doomsday.'

'That's as may be, Mr. Charlesworth,' returned d'Haguerty mysteriously. 'Captain Dillon has a document for you in his breast-pocket, given to him by Lord Hove, on the part of his son, Major Bridges. It puts more than a hundred pounds at your disposal. It's unlucky that you must part with fifty to this Featherstone, for eighty is not too much to help a man across the water. But between gentlemen honour, of course, comes before everything.'

'Bridges!' exclaimed Charlesworth. 'Ah, well! I think I was of some service to them.' And, after a pause: 'As to what you say about getting across the water, I don't see how a thousand pounds would help. It would be such a deucedly odd thing for me to give up my parole. I should be dogged by a couple of gendarmes day and night, or, more likely, put into a fortress to save trouble.'

'Parole is all very well for prisoners of war,' insinuated the Count. 'But in your position, though very punctilious on the point of honour, I should think myself justified in disregarding it. Civilians, who have been seized against all the laws of honour, can hardly transgress them in escaping.'

'There's something in your reasoning, sir,' replied Charlesworth. 'Reasoning is excellent matter for talk. But one should never reason oneself into acting, or one is sure to do something foolish.'

'I hope you'll think of that another time, Mr. Charlesworth, when you get a pistol too near your head,' returned d'Haguerty drily.

Patrick meantime had opened the Count's medicine chest, and was deftly bandaging Charlesworth's forehead, where the wound, though profuse of blood, was scarcely more than skin-deep.

'Let us explain to this gentleman who we are,' said d'Haguerty, addressing Patrick. 'Show him Lord Hove's letter, Dillon, and I will then explain to him the conditions on which the money was sent.'

'Pardon me, Count,' returned Patrick coldly, 'but there were no conditions. Lord Hove sent Mr. Charlesworth a note of hand drawing on Gérard's bank for three thousand francs in recognition of his services to Major Bridges and his family when in France. Whether Mr. Charlesworth chooses to take any part in our enter-

prise it is for him to decide. In any case, if he can make it consistent with his honour to come away with us he may count on our assisting him as much as our great undertaking allows us to do.'

'Surely, surely,' murmured the Count suavely, a little uneasy at Patrick's reckless generosity, yet with his usual breadth of mind realising the possibility of its proving the best policy. Just as though uneasy at Patrick's account of what had passed between him and Madame de Ferriet, he yet saw in it a very promising beginning of a love affair by means of which Patrick might ensure the services and fidelity of Madame de Ferriet, with regard to whom d'Haguerty could not feel perfect confidence.

Charlesworth read Lord Hove's letter and listened thoughtfully to the account given by Patrick Dillon and d'Haguerty of the mission on which they had been sent.

'Do you know King Ferdinand personally, Captain Dillon?' he asked.

'I have never had the privilege of seeing him,' replied Patrick, colouring with emotion, as a young man might do questioned concerning the lady of his heart.

'But all of us in Spain know by report the virtues of our beloved King.'

There was a gleam, not perfectly sympathetic, in Charlesworth's eye.

'To get him away would certainly annoy the Emperor,' he said, stroking a bluish chin. 'Then, of course, it would give me pleasure to help you do it. We *détenus* do not love Bonaparte now, whatever some of us may have thought of him before we came to France. But in honesty, Captain Dillon, I doubt whether Ferdinand's return will do the Spanish nation any good. I am a democrat and a republican, and do not blink my eyes when I look at a royalty.'

'Then I fear, sir, we shall not agree,' replied Patrick bristling; 'for I revere kings in general, and my own King, Ferdinand VII., in particular, and I come here to lay down my life gladly if I can but restore him to loyal and patriotic Spain.'

A somewhat crooked smile making its appearance on Charlesworth's countenance boded a cynical reply, and it is possible that but for the presence of d'Haguerty the two younger gentlemen might have wasted valuable time in discussing their respective political principles and parted the worst of friends. But the Count had no love for principles of any kind.

'My faith, gentlemen!' said he impatiently, 'let us to business. We are sent here by the British Government to get the

King of Spain out of Bonaparte's hands. If Mr. Charlesworth will stand in with us, I doubt not that, on our recommendation, the Government will make him a handsome acknowledgment of his services.'

Charlesworth's crooked smile was still there, but it was now a tribute to the Count's good sense.

'Let me know exactly what your plans are,' he said.

The Count explained. He added that he had heard that Charlesworth had command of the stables connected with the English racecourse, and often bought horses for Englishmen richer than himself. Charlesworth confirmed the fact, adding that he was even commissioned to buy one for General Gaspard, who had a fancy to run a horse in the next races. The Count had foreseen that he might here find a means of securing good horses for the relays which must be ready against the King's escape, and the circumstances were favourable beyond his hopes. He suggested that Charlesworth should affect to extend his operations as a horse dealer with the money which the club knew him to have received, without knowing the precise sum to which it amounted. At another juncture Charlesworth might not have been willing to run the serious risk proposed to him by the Count when the condition of his own escape seemed impossible to achieve; but just now the excitement of the thing was in itself a temptation. He asked by what means the adventurers proposed to get the Spanish princes out of the Castle of Valençay the approaches to which were jealously guarded. For this purpose the Count had designed a place of concealment to be made under the seat and in the back of a large travelling carriage which he was to purchase in Paris. He hardly knew where to lay his finger on a workman at once skilful and reliable enough to carry out his design, but believed that with money such a man might be found. Charlesworth called his attention to Madame de Ferriet's servant, Sam Venning. He might not have the courage to undertake the job, but if he would do so, his skill and his fidelity were unquestionable. The carriage once made, they trusted to the Marquesa de Santa Coloma to give them a pretext for bringing it to Valençay. Charlesworth asked twenty-four hours to think the matter over. He would have hesitated less if he could have devised some plan by which he could rid himself of his parole without being sent to a fortress. But at any rate he was glad to have something to occupy his thoughts besides the Gérards and his *coup manqué* at the club.

(To be continued.)

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